

COLLECTOR'S EDITION **Entertainment** WEEKLY

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THE SAGA'S
TIMELINE
EXPLAINED



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

ROGUE ONE

A **STAR WARS** STORY



FOREWORD BY
DIRECTOR
**GARETH
EDWARDS**





COLLECTOR'S EDITION

Entertainment WEEKLY

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

Rogue One
A Star Wars Story

"THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME.



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IT'S A FLIP BOOK TOO!

Thumb through the pages, starting with this one, to see the TIE Striker and U-wing dogfight. Illustrations by Martin Gee.

EVERY DAY THEY GROW STRONGER™

— JYN ERSO



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ABOUT THE OPENERS

We hope you enjoy the illustrations by Robert Charles that open our book's two main sections, on the new movie and the saga. May the Force be with you.

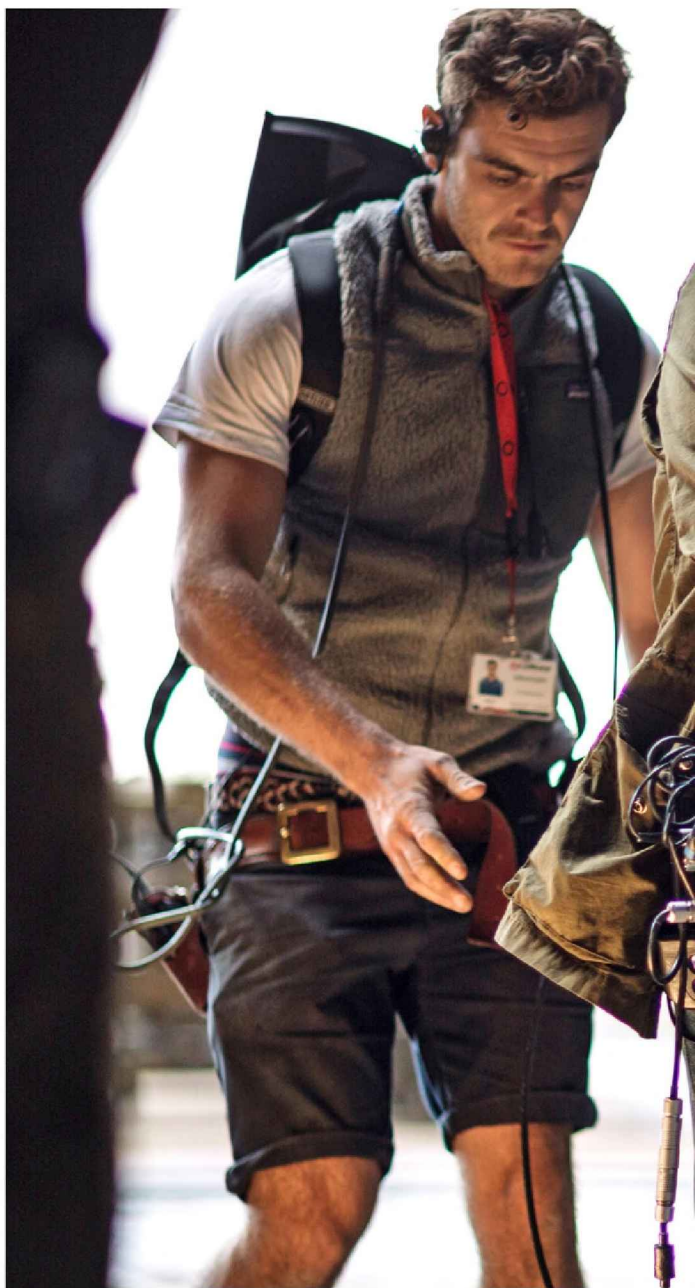
A Childhood Dream, Realized

by Gareth Edwards

As a kid growing up in Britain, Gareth Edwards watched *A New Hope* every single day. That youthful obsession led him straight to the director's chair on *Rogue One*.

I WAS JUST 2 YEARS OLD WHEN *STAR WARS*: *A New Hope* first came out in the cinema. Being so young, I don't really remember the world before it. It was just sort of always there. My first real memory of seeing the film was on videotape, I think, just after my parents bought a Betamax player. I was about 7 years old. Knowing my neighbor had a tape of *Star Wars*, I immediately ran next door and I asked if I could borrow it. With the tape in hand, I returned home to play it and got as far as the scene of C-3PO walking down the corridor in the blockade runner before my mum shouted at me for dinner. I remember stopping the tape and eating as fast as I could and, at that moment, knowing what I wanted to do for the rest of my life ... I was going to watch this film over and over until the day I died.

So each morning before school I would sit in my pajamas with some cereal and just hit play on that tape. I would get through about the first 15 minutes until I was forced to get ready. Then the next morning I would rewind the tape and watch the opening again and again each day, learning the first act by heart. In my youthful mind, I thought, this is what the world can be; I can become Luke Skywalker and live in an incredible world of exciting possibilities. It really made me excited about growing up and wondering at all the things I could do. At some point, however, I started to realize that perhaps I'm not going to be able to join





Director Gareth Edwards gets his camera into position on the set of *Rogue One*.

the Rebel Alliance and destroy the Death Star, and in fact this whole thing was some form of lie called a “film.” So the second best option was, well, maybe I’ll become a liar too and make films instead.

I grew up and went to film school and made a lot of short films but ultimately couldn’t get a job directing anything. It seemed like such an impossible thing to break into. But my flatmate at university happened to be studying this new thing called computer animation, and it was clearly going to be the future of filmmaking. So I bought a computer and got sidetracked for 10 years learning visual effects and animation.

I then turned 30 and for my birthday went to Tunisia, where they shot the location of my favorite scenes from *Star Wars*: where Luke looks off toward the setting suns. To me, that’s the most important moment because it’s all about the future, about this aspiration of wanting to do something better with your life. It’s that excitement of the blank page. In the end I got a photograph of me in the same spot as Luke at sunset. It was so surreal to see this place actually existed (albeit with just one sun). That it wasn’t a far-off dream, but a real, tangible place that you could stand in. I felt inspired and determined more than ever to become a director.

Of all the *Star Wars* movies I’ve heard about being considered for production, this one, *Rogue One*, felt the most personal to me. To be offered what’s essentially the prologue to *A New Hope*, the closest thing you can get to those first 15 minutes I watched over and over as a child, it felt like destiny in a way. It was like the inner message of *Star Wars*; that if you believe in something enough and try not to give up, you can make anything happen.

When I was young, I always thought my hero was Luke Skywalker. But as I got older I began to realize it was actually George Lucas. The amazing thing about what he did is that he didn’t just inspire me and a generation with a brilliant film, he also gave us the tools to do something of our own. He invested in and pushed the technology for digital editing, digital cameras and computer graphics. I made my first film,



“OF ALL THE *STAR WARS* MOVIES...
BEING CONSIDERED
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THIS ONE, *ROGUE ONE*, FELT THE MOST
PERSONAL TO ME”

— GARETH EDWARDS

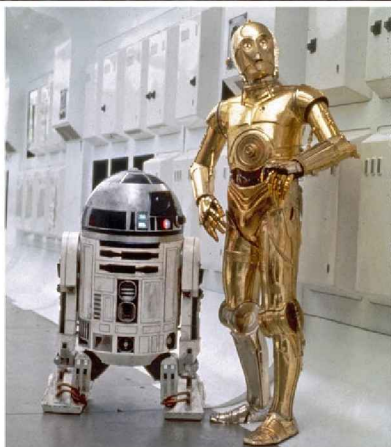
Monsters, because I could afford to do it for very little money. I shot it on a pro digital camera and did all the visual effects on a home computer, technology that would have come about eventually but, if he hadn’t pushed it, I might have missed me. So I’ve got two debts to George Lucas.

I just wish someone had told me when I was 5 that I was going to direct a *Star Wars* movie, because I would have spent the last 40 years thinking about how I’d do it. But it’s a team sport, *Star Wars*. It doesn’t belong to me or any other filmmaker. We are just lucky enough to borrow it for a

time. Thanks to George and Lucasfilm, the world owns *Star Wars* now. It belongs to everyone.

I got to do a million amazing things on this film that I’ll probably spend the rest of my life processing. But in the thick of it, all you’re really trying to do is block out all the craziness and just concentrate on making the best film possible. One day, when all the dust has settled, I know I’ll look back and realize just how lucky I have been. It’s been the ultimate passion project, and I just hope you’ll enjoy watching it as much as we all loved making it.





GARETH IN TOYLAND

One of the many perks of directing *Rogue One*? Getting your picture taken with a mountain of new toys before many of them have even hit stores. This photo of Edwards and his loot appeared on the *Star Wars* Twitter account in October 2016.

(Above) Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) watching the dual sunsets on Tatooine is one of Edwards's favorite scenes in the entire saga. (Left) R2-D2 and C-3PO on the *Tantive IV*; (top left) Felicity Jones and Diego Luna in *Rogue One*.

All About *Rogue One*









Going Rogue

A ragtag team of Rebel spies. A mission to steal Death Star blueprints. The Empire. Darth Vader. Another dark power. Here we go, *Star Wars* fans. This is *Rogue One*. **BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN**

IT'S A TESTAMENT TO THE MYTHIC POWER OF *Star Wars* that laser swords, a bellowing space ape, fiery explosions in zero atmosphere, bickering robots and an invisible, telekinetic power just seemed to make perfect sense. But one enduring plot hole is a literal plot hole: that thermal exhaust port on the first Death Star that allowed the moon-size battle station to be destroyed with a single shot.

Okay, so how exactly did that get there? Why would the Empire's doomsday architects incorporate such a catastrophic design flaw? And how did the Rebellion find out about it? Almost 40 years after the release of the original movie, *Rogue One: A Star Wars Story* is preparing to answer those questions with a battlefield heist tale that will conclude just before the events of *A New Hope*.

It's a new kind of movie for Lucasfilm, a stand-alone story that explores territory beyond the core "saga" films: the first three classic movies, George Lucas's prequels and the new trilogy that will continue in 2017 with director Rian Johnson's *Episode VIII*. After J.J. Abrams firmly reestablished *Star Wars* as the center of the pop culture universe with the record-demolishing *The*

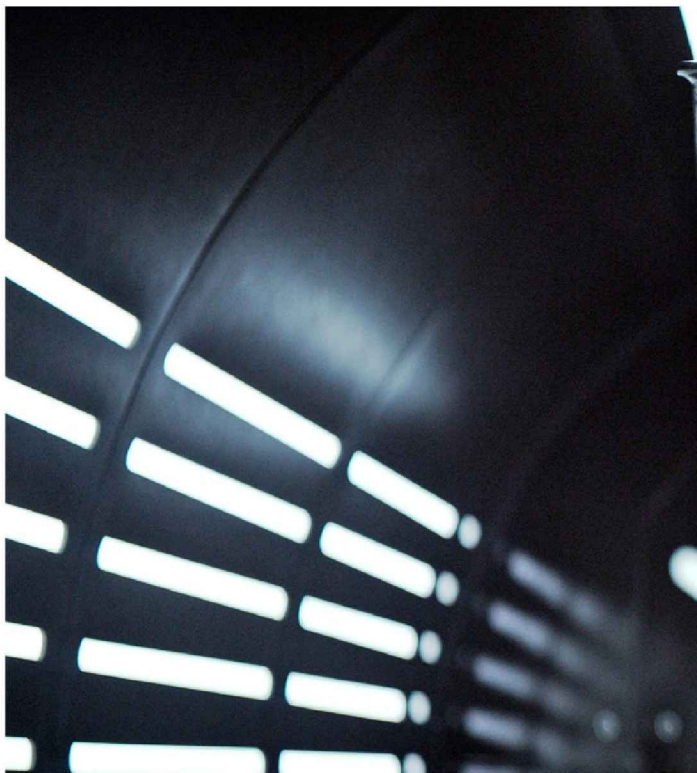
Imperial Death Troopers in *Rogue One* stalk the deceptively peaceful-looking terrain of a planet that only appears to be a paradise.

Force Awakens, Lucasfilm and its parent company Disney are now looking to capitalize on the Sarlacc-esque fan appetite by delivering a new movie each year. One key to the future will be venturing backward in time: Because *Rogue One* is set earlier in galactic history, it can—and will—resurrect some iconic characters that fans thought were gone forever.

Rogue One takes place 34 years before *The Force Awakens* and roughly two decades after tyrannical Emperor Palpatine seized power in *Episode III: Revenge of the Sith*. The Death Star is how he intends to maintain dominion over star systems that are starting to rise up against him, and the movie tells the story of an outlaw named Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones) and her band of soldiers, assassins and smugglers, who might be enemies if they weren't united in one mission: to get the blueprints for that apocalyptic superweapon. "It's really patterned after a World War II movie," says producer and Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy. "The Rebel alliance is in disarray. Pretty panicked. Up against it." For these freedom fighters, it's do or die. Chances are some will end up with the latter fate.

The story was first proposed to Kennedy by executive producer John Knoll, the legendary Industrial Light & Magic visual-effects designer. (He and his brother invented Photoshop. You're welcome.) "I thought it would be really fun to do a *Mission: Impossible*-style story of a Rebelspy mission," Knoll says. The opening crawl from the original 1977 *Star Wars* provided the template, but there were other dots they could connect from that movie too. "There are bits in the dialogue between Princess Leia and Darth Vader [in *A New Hope*] where he says, 'Several transmissions were beamed to this ship by Rebel spies,'" Knoll adds. "That means those things have to happen in this movie."

When Gareth Edwards signed on to direct *Rogue One*, his aim was to tell the type of story he and his friends used to make up with their action figures. "What we've done with this film is try to take a left turn instead of a right," he says. "We're in the same universe, the same places, in the same time frame. But we're seeing something we haven't seen before."

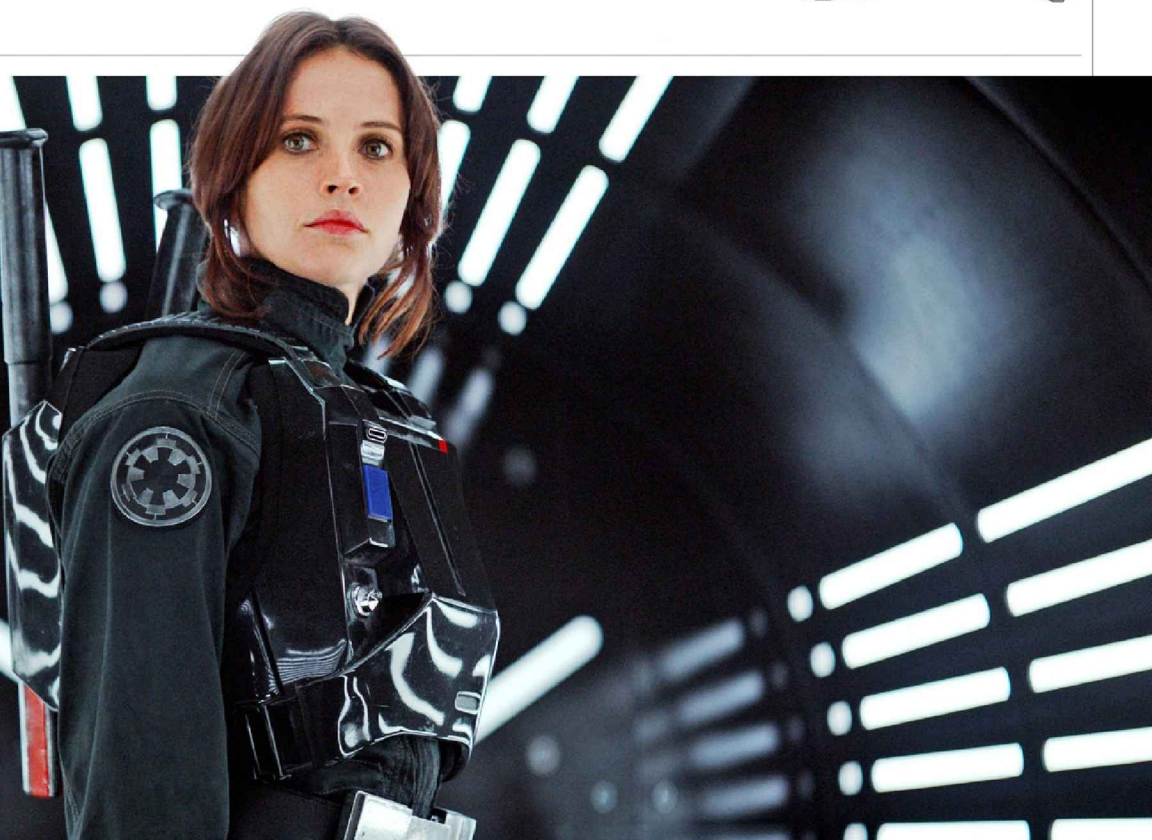


JYN IS ALSO A NEW KIND OF STAR WARS

protagonist, far from a wide-eyed innocent like Rey or Luke Skywalker. She's a troublemaker, a criminal. Volatile but streetwise. Before reluctantly joining the Rebellion, she runs afoul of it. "She has been detained and is being given an opportunity to be useful. And by being useful, it may commute her sentence," Kennedy says. "She's got a checkered past and has pretty much been on her own since she was 15. She's a real survivor. She becomes a kind of Joan of Arc in the story."

Transforming herself into a *Star Wars* hero was a tall order for Jones, who didn't have any background in the street fighting, combat or flying skills that Erso possesses. "Every single day was exhilarating, and the attention to detail was immense," she





▲ Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones) is a streetwise criminal whose checkered past serves her well. After the Rebellion breaks her out of jail, she joins their mission.

▲ Cassian Andor (Diego Luna), Jyn and K-2SO (Alan Tudyk) contemplate their next move (far left). The Empire's AT-ATs (All Terrain Armored Cargo Transports) walkers are formidable foes (left).

says. "I remember early on I did special training with a flight expert, so when we were on the ship it would look convincing. And working with a military expert to learn how to shoot blasters and make it look convincing. It was definitely a zero-to-hero process of immersion."

The mission is also personal for Jyn because her father, Galen (Mads Mikkelsen), is a brilliant physicist who was recruited by the Empire to build the Death Star. "Galen is a person who has knowledge and expertise that is of interest to everybody," says Kiri Hart, Lucasfilm's head of story development, who coordinates all the different narratives, from the movies to TV shows like *Rebels* to novels and comic books. "He's one of those people that has insight into specific aspects of just how the universe works."

Jyn appears to have more in common with a certain wiseass smuggler who will be the focus of the next stand-alone film: a young Han Solo story, coming out in 2018, which takes place before he encounters Luke and Obi-Wan Kenobi in that cantina on Tatooine. The main difference between these anthology films and the trilogies is that the earlier films focused squarely on the Skywalker family. *Rogue One* shifts the spotlight to other inhabitants of the galaxy, but that doesn't mean it will be completely devoid of Skywalkers. "I think we can talk about Vader. . . ." Kennedy says.

Cue the heavy breathing.

COME ON. HOW DISAPPOINTED WOULD YOU be if Darth Vader wasn't in this movie?

Setting *Rogue One* just prior to the original trilogy allows Lucasfilm to bring Vader back in his sinister prime, along with a few other classic characters—although for now, they're revealing only the man in black. James Earl Jones, 85, will return as the foreboding voice, with a variety of performers behind the mask. (David Prowse, now 81, was often inside the suit in the original trilogy.)

Kennedy says *Rogue One* has to make careful use of Vader. "He will be in the movie sparingly," she says. "But at a key, strategic moment, he's going to loom large."



At this point in the chronology, the Rebels are barely familiar with him. Even within the Empire, Palpatine's masked enforcer is more myth than everyday presence. "There's definitely an underlying feeling that there is a power—a dark power—available to the Empire and that if you overstep your mark, you will suffer the consequences," says Edwards.

One goal of *Rogue One* is to step away from the Jedi and Sith to explore the heroism of people who don't traffic in the Force. "The Jedi are pretty much extinct, so a lot of that spirituality is dying out, and people are losing their faith," says Edwards. "This idea that magical beings are going to come and save us is going away, and it's up to normal, everyday people to take a stand to stop evil from dominating the world."

THAT REBEL SQUAD OF REGULAR HEROES IS played by a deliberately diverse ethnic mix from our own planet, meant to reflect a galaxy filled with a wide variety of humans from many different worlds (not to mention a healthy mix of creatures and aliens). "People are coming to the Rebellion because something has happened that has galvanized or politicized them," says Hart. "The question just becomes: What are those triggers for different people in different places?"

Diego Luna plays Capt. Cassian Andor, a Rebel stalwart who anchors the loose cannon Jyn. Hong Kong action star Donnie Yen is Chirrut Îmwe, a blind warrior monk who is not a Jedi but follows the path of the Force, and Chinese martial-arts actor and director Jiang Wen plays Baze



▲ Chirrut Îmwe (Donnie Yen) might want to summon the Force he believes in right about now.

▲ Pilot Bodhi Rook (Riz Ahmed) assesses the situation (far left). Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker) is a battered soldier whose body is part machine (left).

Malbus, Chirrut's Force-doubting rough-and-tumble protector.

Riz Ahmed costars as uptight cargo pilot Bodhi Rook, and Forest Whitaker is a violent insurgent known as Saw Gerrera, a character that first turned up in season 5 of the animated *Clone Wars* TV series. Rounding out this band of brothers is *Firefly* star Alan Tudyk, using motion capture to perform the droid K-2SO, who, like Jyn, is seeking a bit of redemption.

KEEPING WITH THE STAR WARS TRADITION OF planets with a single ecosystem, one key battleground in *Rogue One* is on a world that might resemble a relaxing seaside holiday destination if not for its proximity to the nascent Death Star, the Imperial AT-ACT (All Terrain Armored Cargo Transports) walkers stomping palm trees and the new fang-like interceptors known as TIE Strikers screaming overhead. "This South Pacific tropical-paradise planet subconsciously leads into some of the imagery associated with World War II," says Edwards. When the Rebels storm these beaches, they'll be exchanging fire with new classes of stormtroopers: dust-colored Shoretroopers and sinister, onyx-faced Death Troopers.

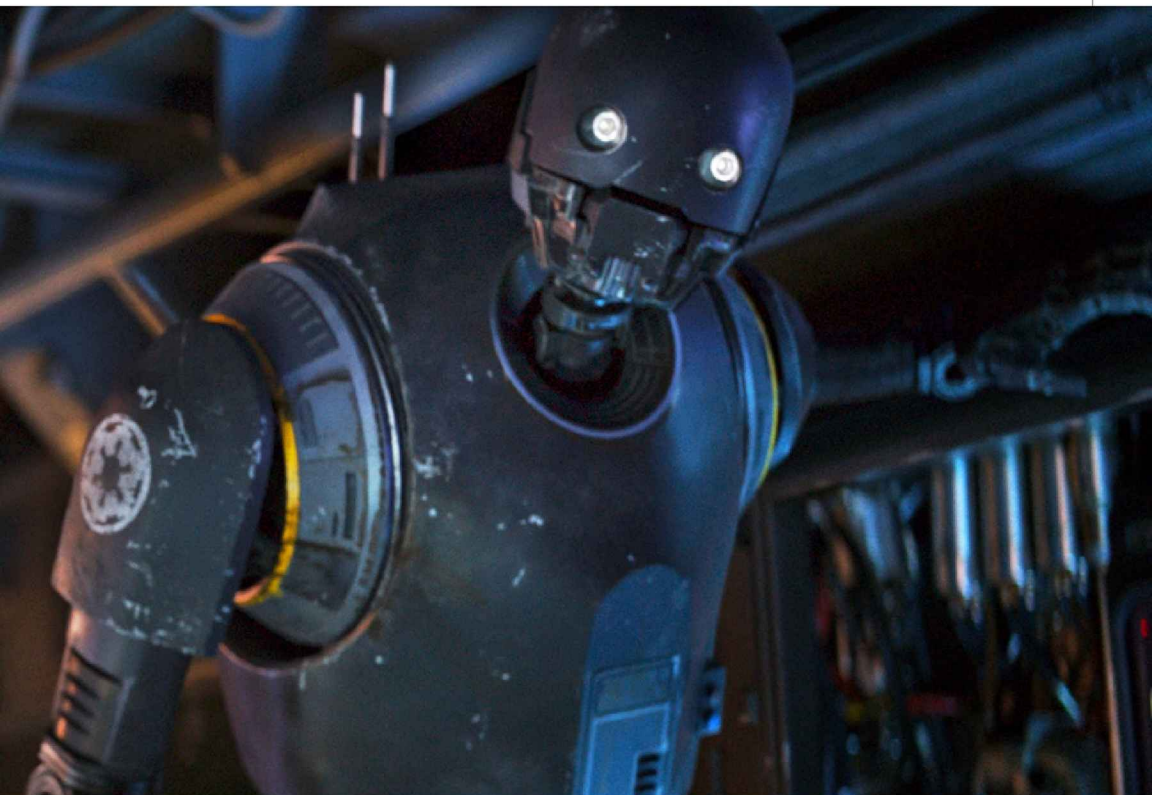
Rogue One's central antagonist is also a newcomer to galactic lore: Director Orson Krennic (Ben Mendelsohn), an ambitious Imperial apparatchik who intends to use his squad of Death Troopers to pulverize this uprising and ascend into the Emperor's graces. "The bad guy is a lot more terrifying when he's really smart and really effective," says Knoll. "There is a lot of palace intrigue going on in the Empire, with people conspiring to move up the ranks and sabotaging each other. There's not a lot of loyalty there."

He and Vader aren't friends, in other words. They're barely allies, and Krennic is understandably threatened by the Sith Lord. "Vader doesn't really play by the rules," Hart says. "He's present in the military structure, but he's not beholden to it. He's not accountable to anybody, really, except Palpatine." With Vader looming, Krennic has a lot of motivation to keep the Empire's plans from going awry.



Rogue One endured its own change of plans, with a few weeks of late-in-the-game reshoots. Kennedy told *EW* the changes dealt with pumping up emotion, clarifying plot lines and adding extra intensity to action scenes—not to radically change plot points. And Edwards insists the hardscabble vibe of the movie has not been compromised. "A film is a very creative, organic process, and it evolves over time," he says. "There's no right or wrong. There's just 'better' and 'best,' and with *Star Wars*, nothing but the best is going to do. So we're just putting a lot of pressure on ourselves until the very end, making this the greatest film it can be." Think about it this way: If the Empire could go back and plug that exhaust hole in the Death Star, don't you think they would?





▲ Devoted Rebel intelligence officer Capt. Cassian Andor (Diego Luna) sizes up the situation with his trusted security droid K-2S0 (voiced by Alan Tudyk).

▲ This time the villain wears white. Director Orson Krennic (Ben Mendelsohn) leads his menacing squad of Death Troopers (far left). Rebel Baze Malbus (Jiang Wen) is Chirrut's best friend and prefers blasters with planet-rattling firepower (left).

'It Feels Like You're at Home Again, Like You're a Child'

That's what it was like to direct *Rogue One*, according to Gareth Edwards. From England and Iceland to Jordan and the Maldives, the production traveled the globe (if not quite the galaxy). Here's a look at some of the on-set action. By Devan Coggan



▲
Bistan (above) mans the gun on a Rebel U-wing. Nicknamed Space Monkey, he is an alien from the lakaru species.

►
Ben Mendelsohn storms the beach as Director Orson Krennic. The costume department based the actor's white uniform on an unnamed Empire official from *A New Hope* but with one important addition, "A cape is a big deal," Mendelsohn says. "If you're wearing a cape in the Empire, you're happening."





Director Gareth Edwards (far right) gathers on-set with (clockwise) Donnie Yen, Felicity Jones, Alan Tudyk, Diego Luna and Jiang Wen. "Everyone knows deep down that if we do our job properly, people are going to watch [our movie] 10, 20 times. And so you've got to make it work for the 10th time you see it," he says.

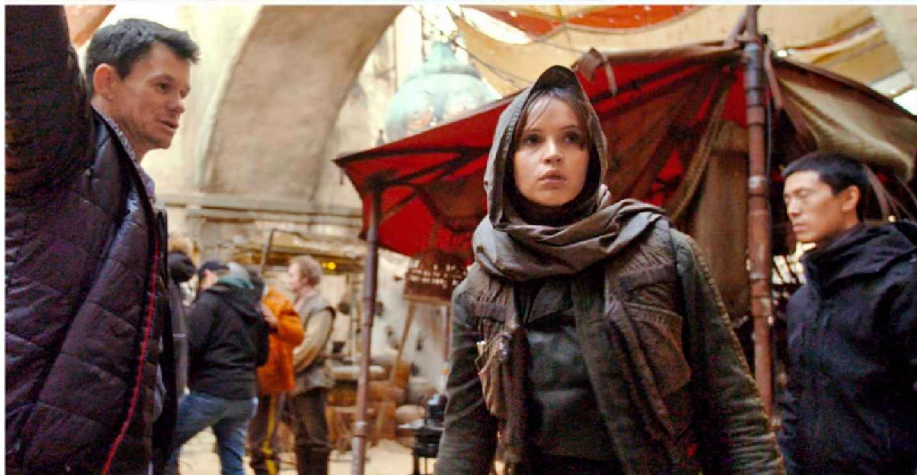
As the blind warrior-monk Chirrut Imwe, Donnie Yen (below left) wore uncomfortable contact lenses that he could tolerate for only a few hours. He used a less irritating pair for wide shots and fight scenes, but they still limited his vision. "These elements could be a risk factor for both sides—for myself as well as for some of the stormtroopers," Yen says, laughing.



Behind the Scenes

► A helicopter films an aerial shot on a beach in the Maldives—one of many complicated location setups. “A film is probably the result of 5,000 decisions, if not a million,” Edwards says.

▼ (Clockwise from bottom right) Warwick Davis, who has played characters in *Return of the Jedi*, *The Phantom Menace* and *The Force Awakens*, is back for *Rogue One*; stormtroopers fall in line; Jones prepares for action; Moroff looks suitably fluffy.

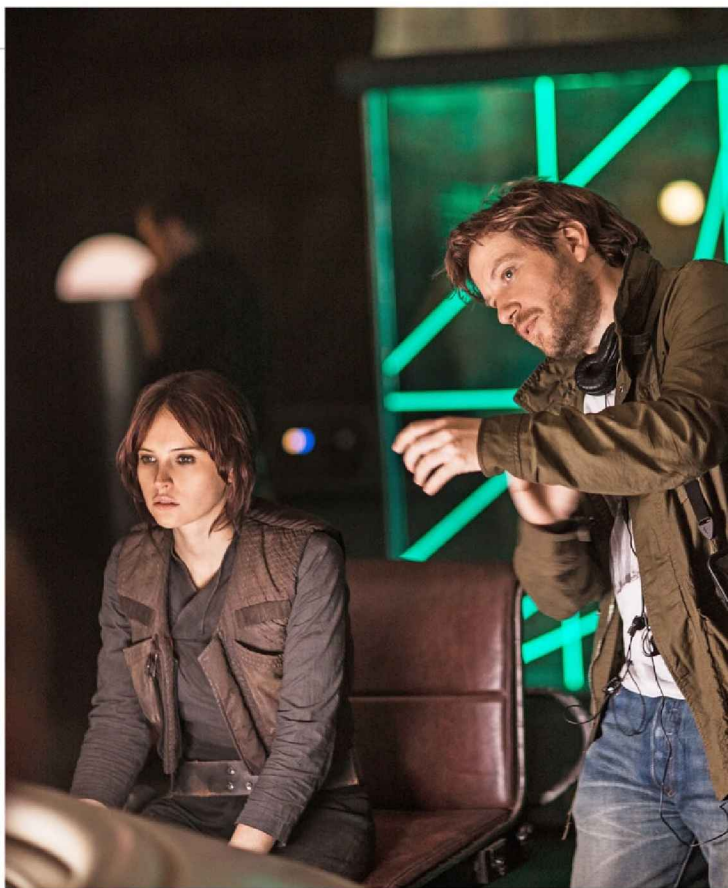




Behind the Scenes

► "It's hard to get intimidated when you can constantly look left and see a stormtrooper or look right and see an X-wing," says Edwards (here with Jones and Luna). "It just feels like you're at home again, like you're a child."

▼ (Top) Ben Daniels (who plays General Merrick) keeps his sense of humor. (Bottom) Jones and Luna make a run for it.





▼
(Top) Rebel soldier Pao (a.k.a. Bigmouth) is a platoon leader of sorts. "There was this great design of this creature [whose] mouth would open really wide, and he looked like he was really good at giving orders and shouting at people during a battle," Edwards has said. (Bottom) Stormtroopers go in for the kill.



A Long Time Ago . . .

Rogue One takes place about two decades after the events depicted in *Revenge of the Sith* and just before those in *A New Hope*—which means 11 years after the Gorse Conflict and four before Operation Cinder. Yes, the *Star Wars* timeline is complicated, but we've plotted the essential points for you here, using the Blockade of Naboo as Year Zero. **By Alyssa Smith**



BLOCKADE OF NABOO

Senator Palpatine of Naboo (a.k.a. Darth Sidious) secretly orchestrates the Trade Federation's invasion of his homeworld.



SENATOR PALPATINE RISES

The Galactic Senate passes a vote of no confidence on the sitting chancellor Finis Valorum. Palpatine succeeds him as Supreme Chancellor.

AFTER THE BLOCKADE OF NABOO

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BEFORE THE BLOCKADE OF NABOO

FOUNDING OF THE GALACTIC REPUBLIC

The democratic Galactic Republic, led by an elected Supreme Chancellor and supported by the Jedi Order, governs the galaxy through a thousand-year era of peace and prosperity.



THE PHANTOM MENACE (1999)



HAN SOLO IS BORN



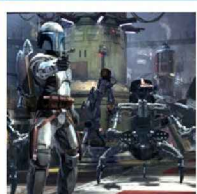
MON MOTHMA ELECTED SENATOR

Note: We have chosen not to use the once-standard BBY/ABY dating system (still in use in the Legends timeline), following instead the chronology as it unfolds in the movies, TV series and books.



COUNT DOOKU JOINS THE SEPARATISTS

Under the supervision of his master, Sidious, Count Dooku (Darth Tyranus) stirs up discontent and sets the stage for the Separatist Crisis by creating a competing government: the Confederacy of Independent Systems.



MILITARY CREATION ACT

The Senate votes to give Palpatine emergency military powers, which he uses to build a clone army, created from the DNA of the mercenary Jango Fett.



THE RISE OF DARTH VADER

Anakin Skywalker discovers Palpatine's true identity as a Sith Lord and backs him instead of the Jedi Masters who intended to arrest the duplicitous chancellor.

DISSOLUTION OF JEDI ORDER

Palpatine announces he has uncovered a plot by the Jedi to overthrow the Senate and activates Clone Protocol 66, an order implanted in the clone troopers to shoot down their Jedi commanders.

BIRTH OF THE GALACTIC EMPIRE

Palpatine reorganizes the Republic into the Galactic Empire, a "safe and securer society," and pronounces himself Emperor.

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ATTACK OF
THE CLONES
(2002)



THE CLONE WARS
(2008-2015)



REVENGE OF
THE SITH
(2005)

The Empire Rises

It takes some serious political manipulation to convince a democratic galaxy to embrace an emperor—and the Sith Lord Darth Sidious made it happen. His machinations onscreen begin with the Blockade of Naboo in Star Wars I: The Phantom Menace.

THE GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

The Republic's clone army, under the leadership of Jedi generals, faces off against the Separatists' drones. The relationship between the clones and Jedi, who are used to working independently, slowly sours.

New Heroes Emerge
Corruption in the newly formed Empire is rampant, leading to unrest throughout its many planets, especially in formerly Separatist worlds. Pockets of insurrection soon join together to form the Rebel Alliance to Restore the Republic, known to the Empire as the Rebellion.



LOYALIST SENATORS UNITE

Senators Mon Mothma and Bail Organa are disturbed by the founding of the Empire and begin to meet in secret to discuss Emperor Palpatine.



SEPARATISTS WORLDS REBEL

The ex-Republic Intelligence agent Berch Teller attempts to betray the Empire from within but is foiled by Tarkin, whom the Emperor rewards with a promotion to Grand Moff and a new role supervising the construction of a superweapon above Geonosis.



BIRTH OF LUKE AND LEIA SKYWALKER

Padmé Amidala dies in childbirth after delivering twins whose father is Anakin (now Darth Vader). Bail Organa adopts the girl, and Obi-Wan Kenobi takes the boy to Tatooine, where he is raised by Anakin's stepbrother Owen Lars.



RYLOTH INSURGENCY

The leader of the Twi'lek Resistance, Cham Syndulla, tries and fails to kill Vader and the Emperor after luring them to the planet Ryloth.



THE GORSE CONFLICT

Unsafe conditions in the mining world of Gorse and its moon Cynda force Kanan Jarrus (a Jedi survivor of Order 66) to take a stand against the Empire. He teams up with the pilot Hera Syndulla, daughter of Cham.



LOTHAL REBELS UNITE

A cell of Resistance fighters on the Outer Rim planet Lothal bands together and calls itself the Spectres, operating out of Hera's Ghost ship. Kanan Jarrus leads Jedi apprentice Ezra Bridger, the Mandalorian Sabine Wren and the Lasat warrior Garazeb Orrelios in various plots against the Empire.



THE FULCRUM REVEALED

Ahsoka Tano, Anakin Skywalker's former Padawan, reveals herself as the mysterious Fulcrum, who has been feeding information to Ghost Team on behalf of the Rebellion.



IMPERIAL SENATE DISSOLVED

The Emperor dissolves the Senate, the last functioning remnant of the Republic, and moves to centralize powers under the planetary Governors.

ALDERAAN ASSISTS GHOST TEAM

Bail Organa, working with his old Senate friends to undermine the Empire, sends his daughter, Princess Leia, to assist the Lothal rebels.



STAR WARS REBELS (2014-)



THE GREAT JEDI PURGE

Vader leads Inquisitors trained in the Force to wipe out remaining Jedi who escaped Order 66.



ROGUE ONE (2016)



THE BATTLE OF YAVIN

After rescuing Leia from the Death Star, Luke and Han Solo take down the superweapon in the first major victory for the Rebellion.



THE BATTLE OF ENDOR

As the Imperial Fleet and the Rebellion dogfight in space, and Han, Leia and Chewie battle Empire forces on the ground, Luke and Vader duel on Death Star II. But when the Emperor tortures Luke for rejecting the dark side, Vader musters up his last shred of humanity and kills his former master to protect his son. Before the two Skywalkers can escape the exploding Death Star, what is left of Anakin Skywalker dies.

OPERATION CINDER

The death of Emperor Palpatine sets off a series of disasters on his home planet of Naboo and at least a dozen other worlds, one final act of terror from the late Sith Lord.

THE BATTLE OF JAKKU

The fleet of the Rebellion, now calling itself the New Republic, routs the Empire in the largest battle since Endor. After a Star Destroyer crashes onto Jakku's surface, the two militaries sign a historic peace treaty: the Galactic Concordance.

DEMILITARIZATION OF THE REPUBLIC

Mon Mothma, now Supreme Chancellor, leads the New Republic in the demilitarization stipulated by the treaty. Active forces are reduced by 90 percent.

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A NEW HOPE
(1977)



THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK
(1980)



RETURN OF THE JEDI
(1983)



BIRTH OF BEN SOLO

CLOUD CITY ANNEXED

Darth Vader lures Luke to the mining installation of Cloud City by using Leia, Han Solo and Chewbacca as bait. During a lightsaber duel, Darth drops the ultimate truth bomb on Luke: "I am your father."



The Rebels Triumph

After Rebels steal the Death Star plans, Mon Mothma leads the Alliance to a series of victories against the Galactic Empire. Recruitment for the cause skyrockets following the destruction of Alderaan.



LEIA FORMS THE RESISTANCE

The fleet Senator Leia Organa discovers a new danger stirring in the galaxy: the First Order. Once the New Republic learns that Leia and Luke's father was the deceased and war-hungry Imperial Darth Vader, the New Republic refuses to rearm. Leia quietly begins to gather like-minded individuals to her side.

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BIRTH OF REY



THE FORCE
AWAKENS
(2015)





Rebels with a Cause

Who are these insurgents brazen enough to go against the Empire? And just who, exactly, are they battling? Here's your guide to the new film's characters—and the actors who play them.

BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN, DEVAN COGGAN AND JOE MCGOVERN

JYN ERSO *FELICITY JONES*

IT WAS A MEETING AT DAWN IN A HUSHED hotel restaurant when Felicity Jones was recruited for a covert mission. Director Gareth Edwards had recently signed on to make *Rogue One*, and he was considering her as the big sister to lead this band of brothers. “Most of the meeting was conducted in whispers as he explained the story and the character,” Jones says. “My first introduction was definitely one shrouded in secrecy and being very careful no one overheard what we were talking about.”

Nearly two years later Jones is finally at the stage when she can talk about it. Her character, Jyn Erso, is a castoff, a criminal, a woman orphaned as a young girl who is still struggling to find a way to survive in the shadow of a galactic dictatorship. She has come to the attention of the burgeoning Rebel Alliance, a resistance force that breaks her out of jail so she can help them figure out what exactly the Empire is building in the deep reaches of space.

Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones, center) stands with her team: (clockwise, from top left) Cassian Andor (Diego Luna), Baze Malbus (Jiang Wen), Chirrut Imwe (Donnie Yen) and Bodhi Rook (Riz Ahmed).



To paraphrase an old song, some people might call Jyn a space cowboy. She has the low-slung holster, outlaw sensibility and survivor instinct of a classic western character. "There's definitely an element of this woman having that independence and sense of having to forge her own destiny in difficult circumstances," Jones says. Even her lurching, wounded gait as she marches onto a metal gantry in the sky to confront a hovering TIE fighter resembles that of a gunslinger walking into a showdown.

Jyn's scientist father (played by Mads Mikkelsen) was captured by the Empire when Jyn was a child, leaving her to fend for herself, but new communiqués intercepted by the Rebels reveal that he is alive and well—and involved in the construction of the Emperor's superweapon.

Jyn's job is to help the Alliance follow his trail and secure the plans that will eventually allow Luke Skywalker to destroy the Death Star. She and her misfit team—a blind Force follower, a rehabilitated droid, a former Imperial pilot, among others—will fight in space, on land, in the pouring rain and under a sweltering desert sun to complete the mission. "I'm laughing now, but at the time it was physically exhausting," says Jones. "I never thought beating up stormtroopers was something I'd be doing in my job."

The petite Jones acknowledges she is not a typical action hero but says that's part of Jyn's appeal. "She's someone on the edges and fringes of society, and physically she's smaller than everyone else around her," she says. "But when someone has something they believe in, that's what powers them, that's what motivates them, that's what can give someone enormous strength."

In fact, Edwards chose Jones because she wasn't "so kick-ass and shields-up that the audience couldn't empathize with her," he says. "There were a lot of people who could learn how to fight and beat people up and do the physical side of it. . . . But you can just hang the camera on Felicity and not say a word, and you can feel her having a million different thoughts. She just has that knack for pulling you in."



Jyn Erso is, according to Felicity Jones, "on the edges and fringes of society."



KICKING BUTT

FIGHTING FORM

To play *Rogue One*'s hard-boiled heroine Jyn Erso, Felicity Jones trained in wushu martial arts. When it came to knocking down stormtroopers, elegance was not a priority. —BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN



Felicity Jones (with Diego Luna) got a taste of the action and then some in *Rogue One*.

The trick to performing a good fight in *Star Wars* is learning to mess up convincingly.

For her many hand-to-hand-combat scenes in *Rogue One*, Felicity Jones underwent extensive training in wushu martial arts, but she says the danger is getting too skillful and creating a brawl that seems overly choreographed.

"It's not all completely polished," she says. "There is a sense of things not always going perfectly that makes the *Star Wars* universe so endearing. The characters sometimes mess things up, but they have this bravery and strength of character to win in the end."

Much of her wushu training involved grappling and hurling the soldiers of the Empire, but Jyn also has a favorite weapon—a baton she uses to wallop her enemies into submission. "I spent many hours walking around my apartment with this tiny little stick and trying to make it look convincing that Jyn could whip

this out at any moment and take out six stormtroopers."

The movie is constantly setting up a David vs. Goliath motif between the scrappy, somewhat disorganized Rebels and the overpowering war machine of the Imperials. "In many ways the Rebels, they don't have a leg to stand on," she says. "They're all outsiders in some way, and they're coming together to fight something far bigger than them, far more efficient. The Empire is wealthier, and it has everything the Rebels don't, so the odds are definitely stacked against them."

Their hidden power, she says, is in unity. "It was quite magical to play and you realize how much strength they have to have as a team," Jones says. "Even between them there are little disagreements, but all of these individuals, who have probably been a bit lost at different times in their lives, come together and are united in trying to make good win over the Goliath that is evil."

Jyn can now join Daisy Ridley's Rey from *The Force Awakens* as inspiration to girls eager to fight the good fight—and at a time when the United States has nominated its first female candidate for President, Jones says fantasy can change reality for the better. "It's vital," she says. "As we're seeing in politics, it is a world where women are becoming leaders of nations, and films should be reflecting that." As a slogan, "I'm with her" is already taken, but the Rebel tough guys of *Rogue One* could use one of their own. "I'm with Erso," maybe?

CASSIAN ANDOR DIEGO LUNA

CASSIAN ANDOR IS THE GOOD COP, THE REBEL who brings balance to the loose-cannon outlaw Jyn Erso as they begin building a team to track down the Death Star plans.

allowed to be part of [his creation.] I don't feel I was dressed and placed there to say my lines," he says. "I was building my character, but he is a very mysterious one."

What Luna can say about good Captain Andor is he's been wounded in ways that can't immediately be seen. He has lived most of his life under galactic dictatorship, and most of those years have been spent resisting the powerful forces of Darth Vader and the Emperor. But despite many losses, he has not lost his fire.

"He's been doing this for his whole life, and still he has strong feelings. He hasn't been able to protect himself, not to get hurt, and that makes him very interesting to play," Luna says. "He can also be vulnerable. He has a constant contradiction going on."

SAW GERRERA FOREST WHITAKER

HE'S THE FIGHTER WHO'S SO FANATICAL, THE good guys aren't sure if he's actually on their side. "He's a really potent character," says Forest Whitaker. "And a warrior who fights to the extent that others call him an extremist. I was very interested in that."

Saw Gerrera was first seen in season 5 of the *Clone Wars* animated series, when he was a young man on the planet Onderon, unleashing guerrilla combat on the droid army of Separatists who took over his world. Along with his sister, Steela, Saw (voiced by Andrew Kishino) fought alongside Darth Vader, back when the Sith Lord was just an impetuous young Jedi named Anakin Skywalker. In the episode "A War on Two Fronts," which aired in 2012, Saw and Steela were part of an insurgent group being unofficially trained by Anakin, Obi-Wan Kenobi and the Padawan Ahsoka Tano.

We won't spoil what happens, but suffice it to say that Saw pays a steep cost for his resistance and remains mistrustful of any authority except his own for the rest of his days. There never will be a peacetime for him.

By the time *Rogue One* takes place, Whitaker's Saw Gerrera is battle-hardened and maybe a little shell-shocked. As he suggests in the trailer when he asks Jyn Erso, "If you continue to fight, what will you become?" he has become *something*—and it's not quite a hero. Rather he's a man who has tried to do the right thing by occasionally doing questionable things.

"I don't think he's regretful. I think he really believes that what he has done is right," Whitaker says. "He understands that worlds could be destroyed if he doesn't succeed. And he's one of the only people who will do everything to make sure the Imperial forces don't."

Saw sees Jyn as someone who could follow in his path. "He's really close to her, and they have a very powerful relationship," Whitaker says. "He's talking about how you maybe make compromises that may harm people, or may harm the situation, or people may question it, but if you're doing it for the good, there's a positive thing about that. But what does it make you become?"



Is that a TIE fighter which I see before me? Jyn faces down the enemy.

But this captain also has a hidden side. Diego Luna says there are secrets about his character that will be revealed in due time.

"There is, for me, a lot to say, but you'll see in December," the actor teases. "Otherwise you would have to get me drunk." Luna is only the second lead *Star Wars* character played by a Latino, following *The Force Awakens* actor Oscar Isaac.

Isaac has said he imagined Poe Dameron coming from the world Yavin 4, the site of a key Rebel base in a tropical climate similar to his native Guatemala. Luna, who is from Mexico City, said he also wove some of his own cultural influences in with Cassian's history, but... those are details he also needs to keep under wraps. "I do feel I was

While Jyn is the wildcard, Luna says his character is also willing to bend the rules, but only for the right reasons. "He seems very strict. But at the same time, he's ready to reinvent everything if the cause needs it." Above all, Cassian is a true believer in what the Alliance stands for—wrestling control back from the Empire and allowing the galaxy's various worlds to rule themselves. "He's there to remind everyone that nothing matters more than the cause. I think that's a beautiful thing," Luna says. "This is about the people taking control, about rebels who decided to change the world—or change the galaxy, in this case. It's a beautiful message for the world we're living in today."



Diego Luna plays Captain Cassian Andor, who has dedicated his life to the Rebellion.

And how do you change as a person?" While Saw is an ally to the Rebel squad, he's not really one of them. "Consider him kind of a battered veteran who leads a band of Rebel extremists," Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy says. "He's on the fringe of the Rebel Alliance. Even [they] are a little concerned about him." In Claudia Gray's recent Leia-centric novel *Star Wars: Bloodline*, set approximately midway between the events of *Return of the Jedi* and *The Force Awakens*, the princess turned politician is confronted by a rival who challenges her on the "terrorist tactics of the Rebel Alliance," specifically citing "the campaigns of Saw Gerrera's Partisans."

For *Rogue One*, they needed a character on the borderline, someone who would represent the extreme end of the fight against the Emperor. Producer John Knoll's idea was to show how the Death Star is a threat that pulls the disparate Rebel factions into a place of unity. The Lucasfilm story group plucked Saw Gerrera from *Clone Wars* history as a good candidate for a radical.

"The Death Star is the event that sort of pulls everybody into a place of unity, and prior to that it's a little bit more divided. Who are at the different ends of that spectrum?" says Kiri Hart, Lucasfilm's head of story development.

It was also a way to incorporate a character created by George Lucas, who has stepped back from *Star Wars* storytelling after selling Lucasfilm to Disney but was deeply involved in the *Clone Wars* series with executive producer Dave Filoni (now overseeing the animated *Rebels* show).

Saw also has some traits in common with another *Rogue One* character who looms large from the *Star Wars* canon: Darth Vader. Both are men locked in life-giving armor whose faces and souls are scarred by the violent actions of their past. "There are some similarities," Whitaker says. "I don't know if I should tell you that." Of Saw's bulbous chest plate, Whitaker says, "This is his armored suit for flight but also for maintenance. He's been through many conflicts and many wars, so it's also about [repairing] some of the many injuries he's had. He wears it all the time."

And Whitaker isn't exactly a stranger to

the battlefield. One of his earliest movie roles was in Oliver Stone's 1986 Vietnam tragedy *Platoon*, and in 2007 the actor won an Oscar for his formidable portrayal of Ugandan warlord Idi Amin in *The Last King of Scotland*.

"Obviously *Rogue One* is a different thing," he says. "But we all were trying to live in the reality of real-world conflict—



Saw Gerrera from *The Clone Wars*.

and what Saw is dealing with is because of his battle experience. I was playing the honest emotional track of where he was. He recognizes that the universe could be destroyed, and for him, stopping that from happening becomes, well, by any means necessary."

CHIRRUT ÎMWE DONNIE YEN

THE JEDI MAY BE GONE, BUT THAT DOESN'T mean there aren't any believers left. A native of the sacred world Jedha (a Mecca of sorts for Force believers), Chirrut Îmwe has devoted himself to spirituality. "He's not a Jedi, but he's connected with the Force," Donnie Yen says. Playing a blind character was a first for the actor, who is a martial artist and action-movie superstar

in Hong Kong, where he grew up. "It was a lot harder than I expected. We can imagine darkness, but it's not just about darkness. It's about some sort of sense of loss, some sense of not in control." And even though Chirrut doesn't wield a lightsaber, he's pretty formidable with a stick. "Of course he can fight," Yen says, laughing. "That's one of the reasons why they picked me."

BAZE MALBUS JIANG WEN

"BAZE IS AN INTERESTING, FUNNY CHARACTER—somewhat a hero, even though he may not know his own virtue so well," Jiang Wen says. Heavily armored, Baze prefers a blaster to hokey religions and ancient weapons, but he is devoted to protecting his friend Chirrut at all costs. "I like his character—I wish I had a friend like this," says Wen, who has been writing, directing and acting in his native China since the '80s. Kathleen Kennedy offers a few more details: "He understands Chirrut's spiritual centeredness, but he doesn't necessarily support it." Baze goes along with this Force business because "it's what his friend deeply believes." Think of them as a little like the galactic version of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.

BODHI ROOK RIZ AHMED

HIS NAME EVOKES BOTH ZEN CALM ("BODHI" IS the Buddhist word for enlightenment) and a fidgety bird of flight (a rook is a type of crow). That's not far off the mark for the Rebel pilot. "He flies a lot of cargo," Kennedy says. "And he tends to be a little tense, a little volatile, but everybody in the group really relies on his technical skills." Riz Ahmed was drawn to Bodhi's gritty everyman qualities. "He's not setting out to be a hero or a Rebel soldier," the actor says. "He's just trying to earn a living. I think it's interesting because a lot of the *Star Wars* saga can be quite dynastic, with people born into a certain lineage. But Bodhi doesn't have a mythical family tree. It's refreshing in *Rogue One* to see a bunch of nobodies. This great challenge just lands on them."

K-2SO ALAN TUDYK

C-3P0 WHO? THE FORMER IMPERIAL SECURITY



Saw Gerrera is determined to stop the Empire "by any means necessary," says Forest Whitaker.

enforcer is the toughest and most confident droid we've met yet. "He can kick all their asses," Alan Tudyk says. "BB-8, it'd be like soccer." Freed from Imperial servitude and reprogrammed by Cassian Andor, K-2 now sides with the Rebels—although they're occasionally taken aback by his lack of filter. "He doesn't give a s--- about what you think," Edwards says. "He doesn't fully check himself before he says things and does things." To play the towering security droid, Tudyk donned a motion-capture suit and stilts, and he says he never had any balance problems whatsoever. "If I did, anyone who saw me was probably paid off and wouldn't admit to it," Tudyk adds. "So let's just say, no, I did not ever once fall down. Not even that one time."

GALEN ERSO *MADS MIKKELSEN*

WE DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT THE MYSTERIOUS scientist, except that he and his daughter Jyn have been estranged for years, and the Empire enlisted him to build its superweapon. "He's one of those people that has insight into specific . . . aspects of just how the universe works," says Hart. Beyond that, Galen is still veiled in secrecy, to the point where Mads Mikkelsen had to wear a cloak to keep his costume hidden on-set. "I think I stressed out my wardrobe people," he says. "They were always running after me, like 'You forgot your cape!'"

DIRECTOR ORSON KRENNIC

BEN MENDELSON

DARTH VADER MAY LOOM LARGE, BUT *ROGUE*

One's big baddie is a formidable Imperial officer who intends to use his squad of Death Troopers to pulverize the Rebel uprising and ascend into the Emperor's graces. "He's the driving force behind a project that they're undertaking," Ben Mendelsohn teases. He compares Krennic to notorious Nazi leaders like Albert Speer or Rudolf Hess, saying he's an official who may not top the chain of command but is still fiercely committed to the Empire's cause. Mendelsohn says he's more than happy to join the *Star Wars* pantheon of notorious villains, describing it as "just glorious dark awesomeness."



Galen Erso (Mads Mikkelsen)



K-2SO (with Alan Tudyk, who played him via motion capture)



Chirrut Îmwe (Donnie Yen)



Baze Malbus (Jiang Wen)



Bodhi Rook (Riz Ahmed)



Director Orson Krennic (Ben Mendelsohn)





Smile! It's *Star Wars*

Every year or so a massive disturbance in the Force erupts at Star Wars Celebration, a multi-day convention for the most die-hard of fans. In 2016 it took place in London. We were there.

WORLDS COLLIDED IN JULY 2016 WHEN GWENDOLINE Christie—a.k.a. Captain Phasma from *The Force Awakens* and the upcoming *Episode VIII*—moderated the *Rogue One* panel at Star Wars Celebration. All nine major cast members, plus director Gareth Edwards, exec producer John Knoll, co-producer Kiri Hart and Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy, participated in the festivities, regaling the more than 4,000 fans in the audience with footage and tales from the production. Ben Mendelsohn proved villains make the best entrances when he marched into the auditorium in full Director Krennic regalia, flanked by four Death Troopers. “We were talking with Kathy Kennedy and we just thought, ‘Why don’t we do something different?’” Mendelsohn says. “It was a special audience. They are dedicated, hardcore *Star Wars* fans, and we thought it’d be cool to give them a little look and a little feel of Krennic and the Death Troopers.”

The crowd ate it up. “You can tell that the love is enormous,” says Mads Mikkelsen, who wished he’d had more time to mingle with fans. “That’s all we can feel and take with us.”

Gwendoline Christie (center) takes a selfie with the *Rogue One* cast and filmmakers at Star Wars Celebration in July 2016.

Star Wars Celebration

"I feel very privileged to have joined the *Star Wars* doll universe," said a jubilant Felicity Jones (right) at Star Wars Celebration. Meanwhile, at the on-site *People* photo studio, (bottom, from left) Donnie Yen, Riz Ahmed and Forest Whitaker, and Jiang Wen express enthusiasm of their own.

What is Ben Mendelsohn (far right and bottom right) whispering in Mads Mikkelsen's ear at the *People* shoot? Forget it. These two are trained in the art of *Star Wars* secrecy. For Mikkelsen, staying mum on plot details was simple. "I can just keep my mouth shut," he says.





WHO'S YOUR FAVORITE CHARACTER?

We asked the cast; they answered

Felicity Jones

"I always loved Obi-Wan Kenobi, because he reminded me of my grandpa. My grandpa was someone I always looked up to and felt like he always knew the right thing to do—and the good thing to do."

Forest Whitaker

"I did like the philosophy that Yoda was trying to teach. Harrison's character [Han Solo] and Chewbacca just for pure fun."

Jiang Wen

"Baze, of course! We're very familiar with each other. We're connected by blood. We are friends."

Riz Ahmed

"I love the Ewoks, man. I just love the idea of these little short-ass, nimble underdogs. It's a little-brother thing. I was a kid and I was getting beat up by my older brothers, and these Ewoks, they were basically like ninja teddy bears, and I was like, 'Yeah, that's me.'"

Alan Tudyk

"I have to say Luke. You want to say Han Solo because he was such a badass, but I was Luke. He was the hero, Luke Skywalker! The Jedi! Come on."

Mads Mikkelsen

"It's hard not to like Han Solo just because he's such a great, funny character. [Harrison Ford] is such a great actor, and he always makes it so elegant."

Donnie Yen

"Han Solo. Darth Vader. Yoda. Each character is so unique and such a part of history, so I can't really say."

Ben Mendelsohn

"I wanted to have a friend like Chewie that would have your back, and to be able to swagger around like Han and be that cool and ride around in the *Millennium Falcon*. I mean, Luke is sort of who you want to be, but to be Luke, you've got to be 'the one.' But Han, Han's doable."







No Jedi? No Problem

A *Star Wars* movie without those who use the Force may seem like sacrilege, but there's always been more to the saga than the Skywalkers. **BY DARREN FRANICH**

A REBEL, AN ASSASSIN, A DROID, A PILOT, A blind warrior-monk, a guynamed Saw: The stars of *Rogue One* represent a wild array of skill sets, a team of rivals Dirty Dozen'd into a common cause. But there's one profession notably underrepresented in the lineup. *Rogue One* is the first *Star Wars* film without a heroic Jedi lead. There's no sage robed elder, no Force-sensitive desert orphan. A Jedi carries a lightsaber, what Obi-Wan Kenobi called "an elegant weapon for a more civilized age." The characters in *Rogue One* fight with blasters and rifles and a big stick: less civilized weapons for an age that's never been less civil.

Star Wars without Jedi: Heresy? The first six movies track the fall and rise of the Jedi order through generations of the Skywalkers. *The Force Awakens* advances that story forward a generation, climaxing in a lightsaber duel between Darth Vader's dark-sided grandson and a young heroine of uncertain lineage but absolutely certain light-side power.

The truth is, a movie that steps away from those narrative elements is not that

Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones) confers with Chirrut Imwe (Donnie Yen), *Rogue One*'s blind warrior who is not a Jedi but is devoted to their ways.

Use the Force?

radical; the *Star Wars* universe hasn't always revolved around the Force. Between the end of the original trilogy and the start of the prequels, the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe explored every corner of the galaxy far, far away, with narratives focusing on characters beyond the most familiar ones. As a *Star Wars* movie, *Rogue One* is a departure. But as a *Star Wars* story, it's a culmination—a once obscure thread known only to die-hard fans, coming to every multiplex near you.

In *Rogue One*, the Jedi are an endangered species. In our own world, ironically enough, the Jedi disappeared after *Return of the Jedi*. In the mid-'80s the franchise spun off its least mystical, most toy-friendly creations. There was a Droids cartoon and an Ewoks cartoon. George Lucas produced a pair of Ewok spinoff TV movies, *Caravan of Courage* and *The Battle for Endor*, which comprise a truly radical alt-reality take on the *Star Wars* mythos. The characters fight witches, shamans and Tolkien-tinted monsters. And the New Age hippie spirituality of the Force is replaced with weird fairy-tale magic.

The Ewok movies weren't supposed to have much to do with the rest of *Star Wars*; they are remnants from the days before Lucasfilm started to take the saga's canon seriously. (See also: *The Star Wars Holiday Special*, a yuletide embarrassment buried deep in the Lucasfilm vaults—and on the unforgiving Internet.) What we now know as the *Star Wars* Expanded Universe began to properly take shape in the early '90s. After Timothy Zahn's *Heir to the Empire*, *Star Wars* novels flooded the *New York Times* best-seller list. These stories initially focused on the further adventures of Luke, Leia and Han—and their children. But the Universe kept growing. A trio of anthology books—*Tales from the Mos Eisley Cantina*, *Tales from Jabba's Palace* and *Tales of the Bounty Hunters*—explored the backstories of the films' most colorful secondary characters.

There were video games, including *Dark Forces*, a first-person shooter starring ground-level mercenary Kyle Katarn as he sets off on a violent espionage mission for the Rebel Alliance. He's stealing the Death

Star plans. Sound familiar?

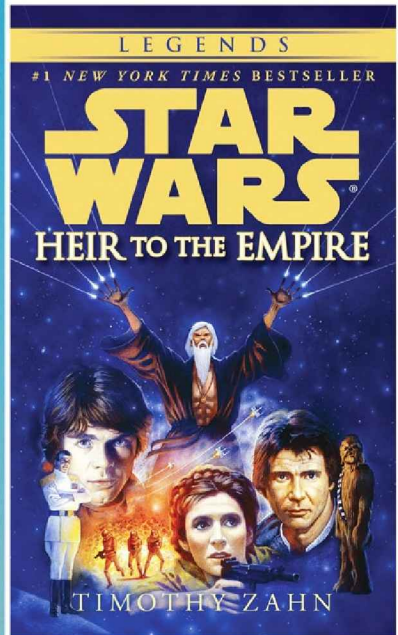
In 1996 came *X-Wing: Rogue Squadron*, the first book in a series written by Michael A. Stackpole that focused on the Rebel Alliance's flying-ace pilot team, including Wedge Antilles. Denis Lawson played Wedge from *A New Hope* to *Return of the Jedi*, making him the only non-lead Rebel to appear in every chapter of the original trilogy. Stackpole's books paired Wedge and some other *Empire Strikes Back* background pilots with several new characters. (Random name sampler: Ooryl Qrygg, Tycho Celchu, Rhysati Ynr, Erisi Dilart, Pash Cracken.) Stackpole also worked on a concurrent *Rogue Squadron* comic-book series that shed the mysticism to focus on the outer-space dogfighting. These were *Star Wars* stories that felt like real war stories. Which



▲ Boba Fett (Jeremy Bulloch) takes aim in *Return of the Jedi* (left). Timothy Zahn's *Heir to the Empire* made the *New York Times* best-seller list in 1991 (right).

▶ Wicket W. Warrick (Warwick Davis), right, and friend wave hello in the 1985 TV movie *Ewoks: The Battle for Endor*, which followed *Caravan of Courage: An Ewok Adventure* from the year before. George Lucas executive produced both spinoffs.





ROGUE ONE IS THE FIRST STAR WARS FILM WITHOUT A HEROIC JEDI LEAD. THERE'S NO SAGE ROBED ELDER, NO FORCE-SENSITIVE DESERT ORPHAN

Use the Force?

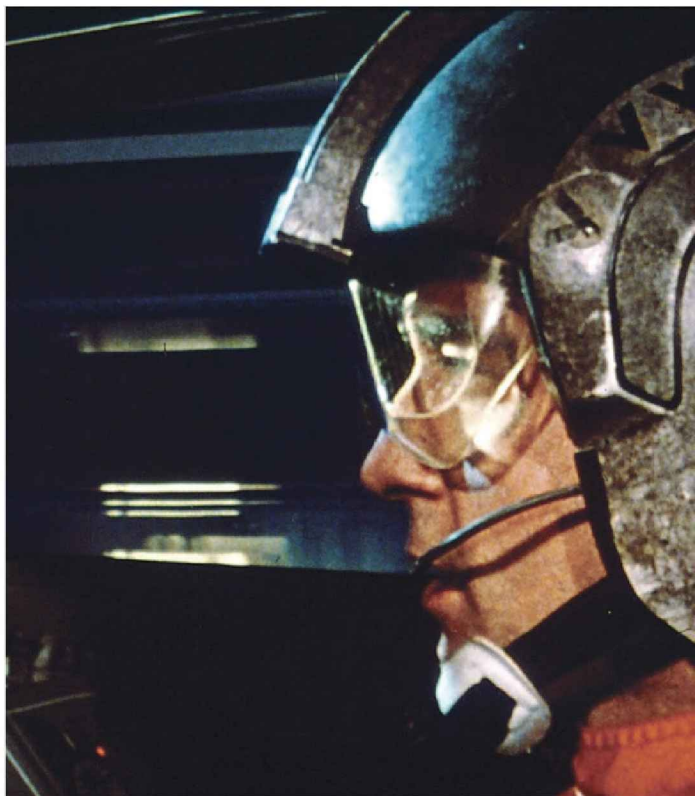
meant a high body count. Any character who wasn't in the movies was expendable.

The rise of *Rogue Squadron* dovetailed with *Star Wars* fandom's ascendant fascination with Boba Fett and the bounty hunters—characters with little screen time in the original trilogy but who lived on thanks to their outlaw cool and cosplay-ready outfits. In 1998 the fan magazine *Star Wars Insider* polled its readers on their favorite characters. Second on the list was Boba Fett, the amoral antagonist from *Empire Strikes Back*. Bounty hunters Dengar and Bossk made the Top 20; Wedge Antilles was No. 8. In first place stood Han Solo—evidence, perhaps, that people prefer (lovable) scoundrels to the Jedi.

Then George Lucas started making movies again. And the morally ambiguous rascals disappeared. The prequels are infamous for their dreary politics, but the bigger issue was how completely the Jedi dominated the new trilogy. It's difficult to relate to a race of robed celibate police-priests, and it's even harder to do that when they're not surrounded by benevolent everymen and villainous badasses.

And here's the thing: When you get deep enough into *Star Wars* lore, the Force becomes a narrative problem, an all-too-easy way to define "good guys." As characters developed across the EU, antiheroes became pure heroes. In the sequels to *Dark Forces*, tough-guy mercenary Kyle Katarn became a Jedi Knight. As Michael A. Stackpole wrote more *X-Wing* books, he turned his fan-favorite *X-Wing* fighter Corran Horn into a force-sensitive demi-Jedi. In one of the loopy Expanded Universe tales, the droid bounty hunter 4-LOM starts meditating... and feels the Force!

After *Revenge of the Sith* killed off the Jedi, rumors abounded that George Lucas wanted to once again explore the less Force-centric aspects of his universe. A never-filmed TV series—the near-mythic, so-called "Deadwood-in-Space"—would have focused on the dark corners of the galaxy. In 2012 LucasArts announced the production of *Star Wars: 1313*, a game set in the criminal underbelly of Coruscant starring Boba Fett.



But when Disney bought Lucasfilm in 2012, those projects faded away. So, for that matter, did every book, comic, TV show and video game I've mentioned: Lucasfilm announced that the new films would ignore the Expanded Universe canon, banishing the original *Rogue Squadron* stories to the "Legends" imprint. But the "Rogue" name looms large in *Star Wars* fandom—and that legacy is a big reason why the first *Star Wars* spinoff is called *Rogue One*. The new movie brings the focus back to the casual heroism of expendable rebels. It's telling that in *Rogue One* the only Skywalker (that we know of) is the bad guy. It's also telling that Jyn Erso isn't a hero chosen by magic or midi-chlorians. She's a soldier on a mission.

And who knows? Maybe they'll make her a Jedi in *Rogue Two*.





▲ Wedge Antilles (Denis Lawson) played a key role in defeating the Empire during the Battle of Endor in *Return of the Jedi*.

▲ Garazeb "Zeb" Orrelios and Sabine Wren in *Star Wars Rebels*.

CRASH COURSE

5 ROGUE SQUADRON ESSENTIALS

Who are they? Where did they come from? How many missions have they led? To bone up on your Rogue history before the new movie, start here. —BY DARREN FRANICH



THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (1980) After helping "Red Squadron" destroy the Death Star in *A New Hope*, Luke Skywalker now commands his own team of hotshots. They fly snowspeeders equipped with harpoons and lunge into battle with enemy Imperials inside monstrous AT-ATs.



BATTLEGROUND: TATOOINE, BY MICHAEL A. STACKPOLE (1995-1996) Stackpole's series of comics followed Wedge Antilles and his starfighters in the days after *Return of the Jedi*. In this early four-parter, the Rogues head to Tatooine, where they're trapped between criminal warlords and the Empire in a search for Jabba the Hutt's treasure.



SHADOWS OF THE EMPIRE (1996) Level 1 of this Nintendo 64 game puts the player in control of a snowspeeder at the Battle of Hoth, shooting down Probe Droids and tripping up AT-ATs. More Rogue Squadron battle-flight video games followed.

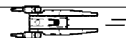


WRAITH SQUADRON, BY AARON ALLSTON (1998) In which Wedge Antilles forms a motley suicide quad: a horse-man with multiple personalities, a grown-up child actor with a past in Imperial propaganda, a half-robot doctor. The idea of a team composed of equal-parts pilots, soldiers and spies leads right into *Rogue One*.



I, JEDI BY MICHAEL A. STACKPOLE (1998) Rogue ace Corran Horn was a fanboy's dream. A sarcastic ex-cop turned Jedi student, he combined the Chosen One mysticism of Luke Skywalker with the witty bravado of Han Solo. Stackpole's masterpiece follows the character on an adventure that runs throughout the Expanded Universe continuity. Also: Space pirates!





Mighty Mon Mothma

The Rebel leader who has one small but critical scene in *Return of the Jedi* returns in *Rogue One*. Genevieve O'Reilly tells us what it's like to play Mon Mothma—for real this time. BY DARREN FRANICH

BESIDES PRINCESS LEIA, THERE ARE ONLY three women who speak in the original *Star Wars* trilogy: one per movie. There's poor Aunt Beru. There's a nameless Rebel technician. And most of all, there is Caroline Blakiston as Mon Mothma, a Rebel commander who gives a pivotal speech about Bothans dying to deliver crucial information in *Episode VI*. The character is back in *Rogue One*, now played by Genevieve O'Reilly. Her face might seem new to the *Star Wars* universe, but this is actually O'Reilly's second time playing Mon Mothma. We spoke to the Irish actress about revisiting the character and the rise of powerful *Star Wars* women.

Mon Mothma has only one scene in the original trilogy. Why do you think the character has become so iconic? That's thanks to Caroline. Females always have a very central role in the Skywalker trilogies, with Carrie Fisher and then Natalie Portman and now with Daisy [Ridley], but there aren't a lot of females around them.

Mon Mothma (Genevieve O'Reilly) looks as calm and stately as ever in *Rogue One*.

Back in the Ring

And I think that's why Caroline really grounds *Return of the Jedi*, with one speech. For those moments, it's not about Ewoks and sabers and that fantastic light-speed energy. It's a woman, a very steel-strong woman, who humanizes the world. I haven't met Caroline, but I've seen her onstage in London, and she's an extraordinary actor.

You originally played the character in *Revenge of the Sith*, but all your dialogue was cut out. Were you disappointed that your role was edited down so much? There were some scenes in that film that were kind of a subplot within Padmé's world, about the formation of the Rebel Alliance. There were a few scenes in her apartment, and in a big meeting room, with Natalie Portman and Jimmy Smits. Filmmakers always have to make tough choices in edit rooms. I think George Lucas made absolutely the best and right decision, because that film was about Padmé, and Anakin turning into Darth Vader.

Did you ever think you would return to play the character? God, no! When I was doing *Revenge of the Sith*, I was living and working in Australia. A couple of years after that, I moved to London, and I've been working in London for the last 11 years. They just rang and told me they were making this film.

How does your experience working on *Revenge of the Sith* compare to *Rogue One*? Did you feel like the character had changed in the intervening years? She had previously been a senator in *Revenge of the Sith* scenes. But now she's leading this Alliance. There are worlds of people with lives in danger, and she's a woman at the helm, trying to get everyone to fight the same battle, to unify against the Empire. That's a fascinating, political, brilliant role.

What was it like working with Felicity Jones?

It was such a joy, because rarely as women do we work with other women onscreen. We're forever working with men. My gosh, to work with another female actor was just

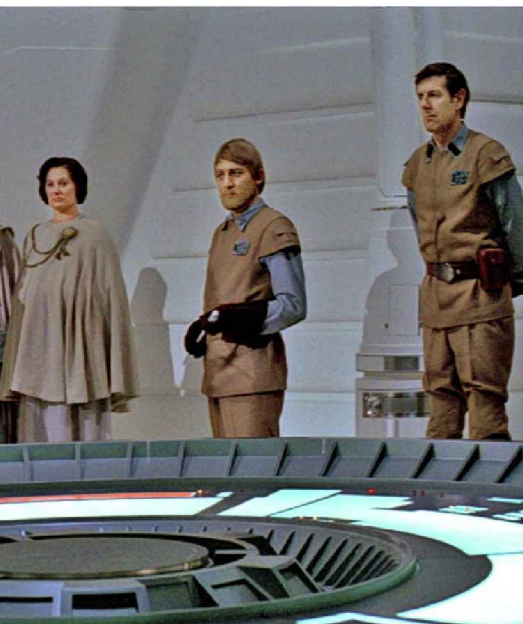
so special! Felicity is brilliant. And what we got to play was two women in very different parts of our lives: one young, rebellious, passionate young woman and an older woman who has perhaps been there, done that, learned a lot of lessons, perhaps lost that along the way.

It's even more remarkable because, in the original *Star Wars* trilogy, there is never a scene with two female characters talking to each other. And we're not talking about wedding dresses or boys! We're talking about life-and-death situations. We're two women with a great deal of weight and power, finding a way through revolution. This piece is led by Kathleen Kennedy and Allison Shearmur, our producer. There are great women creating this *Star Wars* universe now.

Will Mon Mothma return in future *Star Wars* movies?

[Laughs] From my experience so far, anything's possible!





▲ Mon Mothma (Caroline Blakiston, far left) helps the Rebels prepare for attack with Admiral Ackbar (Tim Rose, in white uniform) in *Return of the Jedi*.



▲ In a deleted scene from *Revenge of the Sith* (top), Mon Mothma (O'Reilly) discusses politics with Bail Organa (Jimmy Smits) and Queen Amidala (Natalie Portman). The character appears in the animated series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (bottom).

WHAT IS A BOTHAN?

MOTHER MOTHMA, STILL IN CHARGE

Thirty-three years ago Caroline Blakiston introduced the world to Mon Mothma in *Return of the Jedi*. Though her scene lasts just three minutes, it turned her character into a fan favorite. The British actress spoke to us from across the pond about her *Star Wars* memories. —BY DARREN FRANCH



Why do you think the character has become such an iconic part of the *Star Wars* franchise?

I'm not going to go into your politics, but I'm told that Michelle Obama said to Mrs. Clinton, "If somebody goes low, we go high." And I think what Mon Mothma does is she goes high in the face of a lot of wartime things.

How many times at *Star Wars* conventions have fans walked up to you and said, "Many Bothans died to bring us this information?"

"What is a Bothan?" they used to say! I'd say, "I don't know. I thought you'd be able to tell me." I've changed it to "Many Bothans died to bring you this autograph."

"Many Bothans died to bring us this information." Caroline Blakiston as Mon Mothma in *Return of the Jedi*.

What was it like filming your scene in *Return of the Jedi*?

It was all very secret. They'd sent me text, and you were meant to chew it up and swallow it because nobody was to ever see it. I had something like eight lines. Very, very difficult stuff to learn, because it's *Star Wars* talk, you know? I was very nervous, so I can't say that I had a ball. I was there for a day and a half. Harrison Ford could see that I was nervous. He came and sat down beside me between takes. He did his best to make me feel better. George Lucas did say to me, "Could you speak with a little bit less of an English accent?" I said, "But I'm not speaking with an accent at all. I'm English!"

Have you kept up with the *Star Wars* franchise since your role in the film? How do you feel about the character's return in *Rogue One*?

It's this wondrous thing that has been provided for us all to go on enjoying for the rest of our lives. What a treat to be part of something so huge! I would hope beyond hope that I might be given the chance to come and turn up with gray hair. I'm still an active person. But I know that young Mon Mothma is taken care of now. I'm neither jealous nor sad, only happy for the actress who's getting a shot at her. Maybe one day we will get to meet and have tea together. That would be a hoot!

She Speaks! *Star Wars*' Tricky History with Women

Yes, the original trilogy introduced us to one of the greatest sci-fi heroines of all time. But it wasn't until *The Force Awakens* that the *Star Wars* saga found a way to move beyond Princess Leia. Just in time for *Rogue One*. By Devan Coggan

BEFORE WE MEET LUKE SKYWALKER, BEFORE we encounter Han Solo, we see Princess Leia Organa aboard the *Tantive IV*, stashing the Death Star plans in R2-D2 and fearlessly trading barbs with Darth Vader. The original *Star Wars* movie may have relied heavily on classic sci-fi tropes, but there was nothing rote about Carrie Fisher's Leia. She was a new kind of heroine, a woman who navigated diplomatic minefields as easily as she wielded a blaster. Since 1977 we've watched her rescue her own rescue mission, defeat the lecherous Jabba the Hutt and rise to power as a top general. No wonder little girls have been trying to emulate those cinnamon-roll hair buns for generations.

The female characters of *Star Wars* have a complicated history. On the one hand, this saga has given us some of the most memorable heroines in sci-fi, introducing us to Leia, Rey and Padmé. But the list stops there. The Expanded Universe may include Ahsoka Tano from *The Clone Wars* and *Star Wars Rebels*, Hera Syndulla on *Rebels* and Mara Jade in the novels, but on the big screen, women are seriously outnumbered. They are either nonexistent or mere plot devices sacrificed to fuel Skywalker man pain (think Luke's aunt Beru, murdered by stormtroopers, and Anakin's mother, Shmi, slaughtered by Tusken Raiders). In the original three films, the only women not named Leia who speak are Beru, an unidentified Rebel tech and Mon Mothma. Together their dialogue accounts for about a minute of the entire six-hour trilogy.

For years Leia was all we had. The prequels added Padmé (Natalie Portman) to the roster, and although her characterization is occasionally ridiculous—she dies of a broken heart? *Really?*—she does offer us another strong heroine, cast in a mold

similar to Leia's: part steely politician, part blaster-toting freedom fighter. Only *The Force Awakens* truly redefined what a female *Star Wars* character can be. There's Captain Phasma (Gwendoline Christie), the formidable officer of the First Order. There's Maz Kanata (Lupita Nyong'o), the wizened and worldly smuggler queen. And there's Daisy Ridley's Rey, the brave and selfless scavenger who can fend for herself and discovers a Force sensitivity she never knew she had. Leia, of course, has a connection to the Force, but Rey is the first major female character to pick up a lightsaber and set out on the path to becoming a Jedi.

Now, with *Rogue One*, we have the mysterious Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones). If Rey is Luke Skywalker, Jyn is more Han Solo, a brash, Joan of Arc-style revolutionary who's rebellious even by the Rebel Alliance's standards. (Yes, we realize we just compared these heroines to men. There's the problem in a nutshell.) All of the women in *Star Wars* are survivors, maneuvering through the treacherous politics of Naboo or battling the punishing desert wasteland of Jakku, but Jyn has a history unlike that of any of her forebears. She's got battle scars. A criminal history. And she joins Rey as only the second female character to headline a *Star Wars* movie. Still, even in her own movie—and despite the welcome reappearance of Mon Mothma—Jyn is surrounded by men. At least the Rebels seem slightly more attuned to gender equality than the Imperialists.

It may have taken almost four decades, but the galaxy has finally introduced us to a new group of diverse, fearless heroines worthy of the great Rebel princess. Here's to the strong, self-possessed women of *Star Wars*. As Leia so perfectly put it, somebody has to save our skins.



(Clockwise from left) Princess Leia (Carrie Fisher), Rey (Daisy Ridley), Aunt Beru (Shelagh Fraser), Queen Amidala (Natalie Portman) and Jyn Erso (Felicity Jones) are the past, present and future of women in the *Star Wars* universe.





The Bail Is Back in Town

A *Rogue One* teaser confirmed it: Bail Organa, the gentle senator and loyal friend to the Jedis last spotted in *Revenge of the Sith*, had returned. Fans were giddy at the news—maybe even as giddy as Jimmy Smits when he learned he'd be slipping back into his senatorial robes. **By Joe McGovern**

HE'S THE FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE REBEL George was comfortable with the picture.

Alliance who saved Obi-Wan Kenobi and Yoda from the Great Jedi Purge. And as played by Jimmy Smits, Bail Organa of Alderaan might just be the suavest senator in the galaxy. We last saw him at the end of *Episode III*, when Organa and his wife adopted the infant Leia Skywalker. Now he's back among familiar faces like Mon Mothma, ever devoted to the Rebel cause. Smits chatted with us about his bridge-gapping return to the franchise.

This past July, there was a flash-frame of you as Bail Organa in a *Rogue One* teaser, and it got a full forensic analysis by the fans.

They really do get into it, don't they? I love it. It's the whole fascination with the lore of the franchise and what George Lucas has created. That's one of the reasons I did it originally when George asked me. It traverses generations.

Could you have imagined that the part of Bail Organa would come back to you?

Oh, believe me, I was always hoping it would come back to me. I was always hoping I might pop back into that world. And honestly, *Rogue One* really wasn't that much work. I literally spent more time in wardrobe than I did on the soundstage. I just shot for a couple of days.

How did you first hear that they wanted you in the film?

Well, this whole thing about the stand-alones, I was a little bit unsure. So I had phone conversations with [Rogue One director] Gareth Edwards, and I really liked what he was saying about what he wanted to do with giving the film a more documentary look. And then the message came down from George to me that everything would be cool. That was very important, that

What are your most vivid memories from filming the prequels?

I remember sitting with George in Australia while making either *Episode II* or *III*, and he was showing me the newest generation of high-definition cameras. And now we're at this other level. The digital thing has exploded in such a way that it's given such access to indie filmmakers to experiment and use special effects that they weren't able to do prior to that. That was George's hope.

And that's Gareth Edwards's background. His great movie *Monsters*

(2010) is all low-budget FX.

Exactly, absolutely. And for me, that was great to see how it's come full circle. When we made *Episode II* about 15 years ago, we were in this humongous studio that was just a big green blob. Gareth wanted to be more practical in terms of having the living, breathing things on the sets. The soundstage that we filmed on was a place north of London where they used to make cargo planes in World War II. And the immensity of that soundstage was unbelievable to me.

What was it like walking around the set? Did Darth Vader pass by?

[Laughs] No, I didn't see Darth Vader. But it was very dark and cavernous; he may have been there. Anthony Daniels was around, and he came over to say hello, before getting in character. And I saw all the equipment, the speeders and all those vehicles. My kids would know the name of every single one of them, but I don't.

When the first movie came out in 1977, were you a big fan?

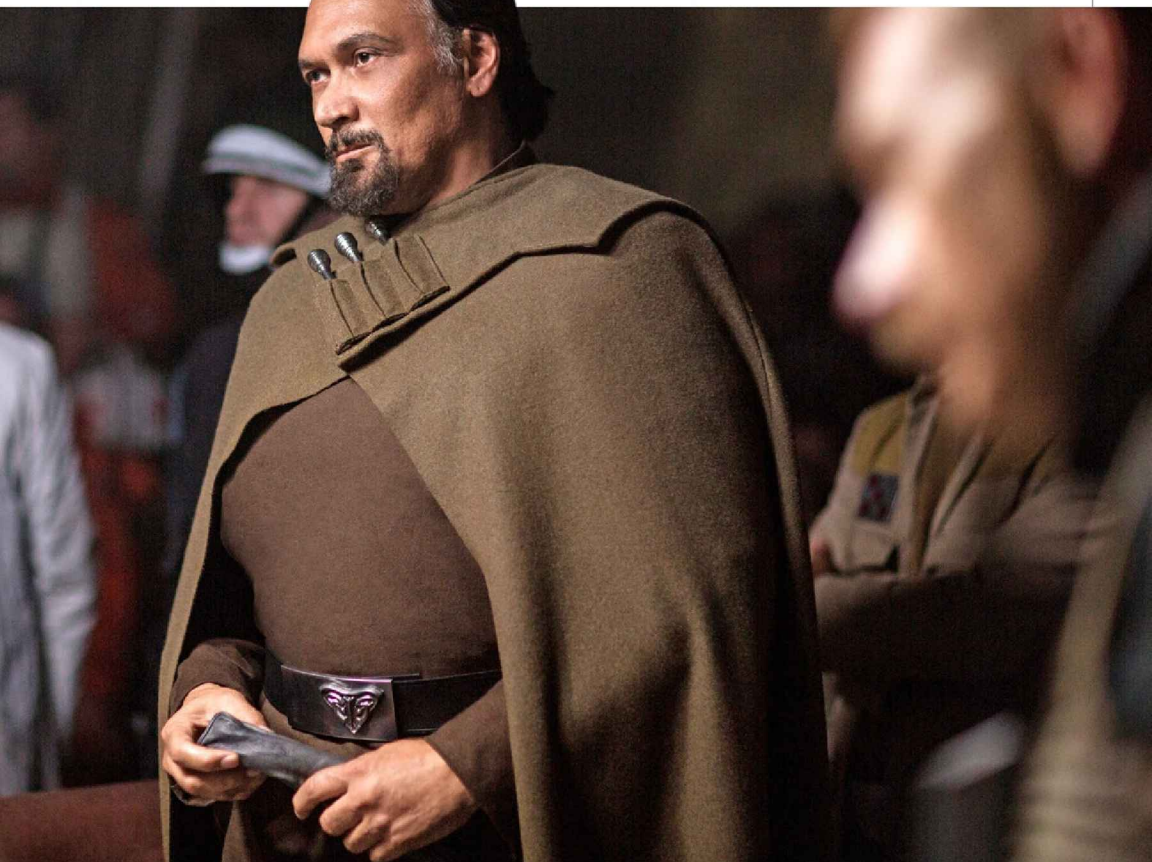
Of course. I remember being on line that



first weekend, and the beginning, when that crawl first came up and thinking, "Oh, wow, that thing looks like it's going into the ceiling." And I loved the fact that there was a wink in the eye of the characters in those first films. It could have been an old Western.

On TV you've played a lot of characters whom you had to carry through a long time span. Did you go back and look at your performance as Bail Organa in the prequels to prepare?

I didn't. Maybe I should have, but the wardrobe does a whole lot to help, espe-



cially with the senatorial aspects. These long robes are so great.

What about finding his voice again, that sort of aristocratic, semi-British accent? Well, but I was sitting beside the wonderful young Irish lady Genevieve O'Reilly, who's playing Mon Mothma, and we were talking about theater. So that kind of classic Shakespearean conversation with great theater actors really gets you in the mood. It made me much more conscious of how I sounded and my diction.

Do we know what's going on with Prin-

cess Leia in *Rogue One*?

Oh yeah. She's definitely talked about. There are allusions to everybody—I mean, everybody—in the dialogue.

The interesting thing is that we all know what Bail's fate is. At the start of *Episode IV: A New Hope*, he's on Alderaan when the Empire nukes it with the Death Star's superlaser.

Exactly! And believe me, every time somebody in *Rogue One* says something about the Death Star, I want to be like, "I know the real deal, guys! I know what's gonna happen!"

▲
Bail Organa (Jimmy Smits) picks up where he left off in *Revenge of the Sith*. Will he discuss his daughter Leia in the new movie?

Dressed to Rebel

What does one wear on a mission to infiltrate the most dangerous forces in the galaxy? *Rogue One* costume designers Dave Crossman and Glyn Dillon explain how they went about outfitting the Alliance. By Nina Terrero



CASSIAN ANDOR

For faithful Rebel captain commander Cassian Andor (Diego Luna), Crossman and Dillon designed a plush parka that pays homage to the fur-trimmed topper that Han Solo wears in *The Empire Strikes Back*. Han's coat was brown, but this one is blue—and for an excellent reason. "Han's parka jacket on the little *Star Wars* toy I had as a kid was painted blue," Dillon says. "It was only when we were researching . . . that we discovered [the real one] wasn't blue at all."





JYN ERSO

As Jyn Erso, the Rebel recruit with a checkered past, Felicity Jones wears a cotton poncho-and-parachute ensemble that reflects the character's tough spirit and is in keeping with the *Star Wars* tradition of functional, battle-ready wardrobes. "Everything feels real," says Crossman. "It's about telling the story." Taking sartorial notes from director Gareth Edwards's military theme, Crossman and Dillon designed an outfit inspired by vintage U.S. Vietnam War uniforms. "It has the look of a classic military flap vest," Dillon says. Details like the red quilting on a vest worn underneath Jyn's poncho are nods to her hardscrabble backstory. "The idea is that she would have fashioned it herself out of materials she would have had," Dillon says. The costume also allowed room for knee and elbow padding worn underneath, which came in handy during Jones's stunt-filled fight scenes with stormtroopers. Says Dillon: "The costume was very much a case of being both practical and comfortable."



SAW GERRERA

A resistance fighter whose many battle wounds have made him dependent on machinery for life support, Saw Gerrera (Forest Whitaker) wears a costume that's equal parts "flight suit, a suit of armor and a kind of medical suit," according to Dillon. Though inspired by the heavy antique armor sported in the 1981 English period epic *Excalibur*, the costume—whose casted polyurethane tubing is affixed with the help of magnets—was actually quite light. And while it still took a team of two to help Whitaker don his Rebel attire each day, the actor "never, ever complained," Crossman says.



ORSON KRENNIC

Don't let the crisp cream hue of his tunic fool you: Imperial Director Orson Krennic (played by Ben Mendelsohn) is pure bad guy. "We love the idea that he was in all white, because you feel that alongside Vader, he just stands out," Crossman says. "They're part of the same organization, so there are similarities, but Darth Vader obviously has a different kind of look." Made of woven wool and inspired by the German military uniforms from World Wars I and II, Krennic's getup didn't immediately earn Edwards's thumbs-up. "He wasn't sure about the simplicity of the costume," Crossman says. But both he and Dillon felt a minimal look would better suit Mendelsohn's chilling performance. "Ben brings so much to the character that we didn't want to overcomplicate the costume," Crossman says. "By keeping it simple, we gave him space to shine."



CHIRRUT ÎMWE

The designers looked to Chinese and Japanese culture when researching the costume for warrior-monk Chirrut Îmwe (Donnie Yen), which led Dillon to the idea of archery. "I don't even know if it had been decided at that point whether he would have a bow, but I drew him with one," he says. "I liked this Eastern tradition that your armor holds the bow." For the monk side of the character, Dillon and Crossman decided that a cloak would not only look cool and move well when Chirrut went into battle but it would also serve an important function: covering up the laser bow on his back and the weaponized cuff on his forearm. "He can move the cape to disguise [the technical gear] and look more monklike," Dillon says. Chirrut might be the most meticulously dressed monk in the history of the galaxy: One costume department staffer spent nearly three days working on the intricate construction of his leather sleeve.



BAZE MALBUS

The sight of a World War I-era Italian grenade at the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford, England, kick-started the design of the futuristic warrior getup worn by Baze Malbus (Jiang Wen). "That's what the backpack is inspired by," says Dillon. "It's armor in the same vein as Boba Fett's from *Empire Strikes Back*." But it's not as hefty as it looks: The pack, like Jiang's oversize neck-piece and leg bands, is made of lightweight plastic polyurethane pieces.

Beasts and Bots

What is *Star Wars* without its creatures and droids? From sleek machines to giant furry critters to human-size amphibians, *Rogue One* seems to be keeping the fantastical tradition alive. Creature-effect supervisor Neal Scanlan introduced us to a few newcomers. **BY JOE MCGOVERN**



C2-B5

Unless there's a big surprise in store, *Rogue One* will be the first *Star Wars* movie without the presence of everybody's favorite bleeping best friend, R2-D2 (see an appreciation of actor Kenny Baker, page 65). But that doesn't mean that there won't be any of his kind. "There was a lot of thought given to making changes to the R2 units while staying within the protocol of what's been established," says Neal Scanlan. The C2-B5, he continues, "is a product of that imagination." As you might guess from the black finish, this droid belongs to the Empire.



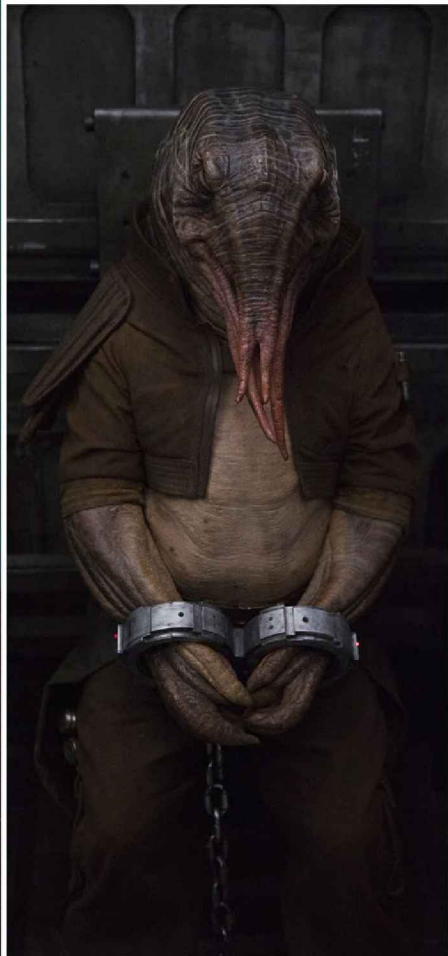
WEETEEF CYUBEE

Warwick Davis has played various characters in three *Star Wars* movies—and in *Rogue One* he's back as a wrinkly member of Saw Gerrera's team. "Warwick is performing pretty blind inside the animatronic head," Scanlan says. "He is cocooned in his [costume], and his imagination brings such incredible life to his performance." Though Weeteef is a good rebel, his look was inspired by a mean fish. "We thought of a piranha," says Scanlan, pointing out that Weeteef's name is slang (wee teeth) for his tiny, sharp incisors.

BEEZER FORTUNA

Sharp-eyed fans will spot the similarity (in name and appearance) between this wormlike fella and the slithery Bib Fortuna, Jabba the Hutt's consigliere in *Return of the Jedi*. And sharp eyes were indeed a major ingredient in the creation of Beezer. "Even though we were using lenses, [director] Gareth Edwards wanted to see the actors' eyes as much as we could," Scanlan says. "He became slightly obsessive about the blinks, because the eyes are an expressive device that resonates through the prosthetics."





OOLIN MUSTERS

Earth's ocean has been a lucrative casting agency for many *Star Wars* creatures, including this rebel fighter who appears in a prison cell. "Squids, lobsters—all the aquatic animals are so great to look at for inspiration," Scanlan says. "And there's something very nice about when you put a squid in a suit and extend things down from the chin. We loved extending his arms to bring all the squidlike proportions in." Oolin is played by veteran actor and stuntman Kiran Shah, who was the scavenger Teedo at the beginning of *The Force Awakens*.



ADMIRAL RADDUS

One of *Return of the Jedi*'s most memorable bit players was Admiral Ackbar, the gravel-voiced, red-skinned member of the species Mon Calamari, whose three-word exclamation—"It's a trap!"—has been the source of a million memes. *Rogue One* features a pair of albino Mon Calamaris (above) and Admiral Raddus (top), whose persona was drawn directly from a famously gruff world leader. "Winston Churchill was our main reference point," Scanlan says. "We were keen to push that forward. We looked at many classic photographs of Churchill during the war period, and if you flick between the two, you will see the influence on Raddus."



BENTHIC

Breathing assistance is not a new concept for *Star Wars* characters, even though the coughing and heavy wheezing is often reserved for villains like Darth Vader or General Grievous. But despite the apparatus on his face (inspired by gas masks from the First and Second World Wars), Benthic is no friend of the Empire. In *Rogue One* he's allied with the Rebels to fight back against the evil forces that conquered his home planet and rendered him a refugee. The oxygen is strong with this one.

K-2SO

"It was a passion of Gareth's to find this character—and we really think he's going to be the next big breakout droid," Scanlan says of this spindly black bot (voiced and performed via motion capture by Alan Tudyk). K-2SO was an Imperial enforcer before getting reprogrammed by our heroes. "As a former Empire droid, he innately feels superior and doesn't like being told what to do. And once we had that idea in our minds of what this character might act like, it very much helped drive his proportions and his above-everyone-else type stance."



MOROFF

The *Star Wars* furry club has included the Wookiee Chewbacca, the Ewoks and the snowbound Wampa that almost eats Luke in *The Empire Strikes Back*. It's about time for a new hairy critter. "We jokingly said that somewhere along the line, a rather amorous Wookiee had met a rather amorous Wampa," Scanlan says. Moroff, who's fitted with a voice-translation box on his mouth, is part of the Rebel fighting force and particularly useful for carrying heavy cargo on his back—though he's not exactly the most cooperative beast of burden. "Whenever he's asked to do something, he does it begrudgingly," Scanlan says. "But whatever his short, grumpy reaction to a command might be, his voice box is always politically correct, saying, 'Yes, of course I will!'"



FARM DROID

The loose-jointed robot works on the farm of Galen Erso (Mads Mikkelsen), father of Jyn (Felicity Jones). "The character alerts him to the arrival of the Imperial troops," Scanlan says. "And he's seen at the beginning, so Gareth wanted the design to feel absolutely *Star Wars*. He's a bit rusty, a bit weathered, looking like a piece of agricultural tool kit that's been out there in the elements." In classic franchise tradition, the droid is real steel, too. His movements were provided by puppeteers in blue bodysuits, who were digitally removed in postproduction.

IN MEMORIAM

KENNY BAKER

The man who played R2-D2 in 6 *Star Wars* films passed away in August. Photographer Kevin Baker remembers his beloved, playful dad.



Kevin Baker fits R2-D2's dome onto his father, Kenny, during production of 1999's *The Phantom Menace*.

Dad looks a bit grumpy in this photo, but he was always quite the happy-go-lucky kind of guy. If that hadn't been his personality, the chance to play R2-D2 wouldn't have come along. And he loved every second of it. He loved shooting in Tunisia, cooking inside that metal and getting time to chat with Alec Guinness. Dad could make R2 wobble and jiggle and really give him character in a way that, even to this day, it's tough to achieve mechanically—that's why George Lucas always wanted him in there. But Dad was always down-to-earth about everything. He knew it wasn't a massive acting role, but he was pleased as punch about the reception from the fans. At conventions he always had the longest line, only because he took so much time with each fan. He'd often tell a story about a woman who wrote to him and said that, as a little girl, she was bullied at school. And the one thing that got her through the horrible times was being able to watch R2-D2 in *Star Wars*. That really resonated with Dad and touched him deeply. He always hoped that would be his legacy.

The Star Wars Universe





A Galaxy Far, Far Away...

What's the quickest route from Hoth to Tatooine? Is there anything beyond the Outer Rim? These are vital questions for those of us who like our geek talk with a side of cosmic cartography, and when it comes to the *Star Wars* galaxy, there is plenty to talk about: billions of stars, millions of planets and more than 5 million intelligent species. On pages 70 and 71 we've mapped out the entire galaxy for you. But first, a look at the four major regions within that galaxy. BY ALYSSA SMITH



COLONIES & INNER RIM

The political clout of the densely populated Colonies and Inner Rim pales in comparison with that of the Core Worlds. During the Clone Wars, some Inner Rim planets sympathized with the Separatist movement, which fought over places like Saw Gerrera's Onderon. To quell incursions from the Rebellion, the Empire kept a naval shipyard at Bestine.





CORE WORLDS

The wealthy Core Worlds surround the deep core, an area packed with stars that's nearly impossible to navigate through hyperspace. Key planets—which were insulated from fighting during the Clone Wars—include the Empire's capital, Coruscant; Leia Organa's homeworld, Alderaan; and the New Republic's future capital, Hosnian Prime.



EXPANSION REGION & MID RIM

The sprawling Expansion Region and Mid Rim are eclectic, encompassing frontier worlds that harbor fugitives such as Maz Kanata's pirate planet of Takodana; homeworlds of species enslaved by the Empire, including the Wookiees' Kashyyyk; and Separatist hot spots, such as Palpatine's own world of Naboo.



OUTER RIM & HUTT SPACE

At the fringe of the galaxy lie the rough-and-tumble Outer Rim worlds. These include Tatooine and the territory controlled by the gangster Hutt, which surrounds their marshy homeworld of Nal Hutta. Both the Rebel Alliance and the Separatists found recruits and hideaways in the rampant lawlessness of the Outer Rim.

KEY PLANETS

From water worlds to forest moons to desert planets, these notable habitats help define the Star Wars galaxy.

ALDERAAN

Destroyed by Grand Moff Tarkin during the Death Star's first public weapons test, this pacifist planet was home to more than 2 billion beings, including Princess Leia's parents.

BESPIN

Orbiting above and around the gas giant planet are several mining facilities and tourist attractions, including Lando Calrissian's Cloud City.

CORUSCANT

The center of the civilized galaxy for thousands of years. It housed the Jedi Temple and was home base for both the Republic and the Empire.

DAGOBAH

During the Great Jedi Purge, Yoda fled to this boggy swamp planet strong with the Force. It was here that he trained Luke Skywalker and drew his last breath.

D'QAR

The lush jungle planet on the fringes of the Outer Rim serves as operations HQ for General Leia Organa's Resistance.

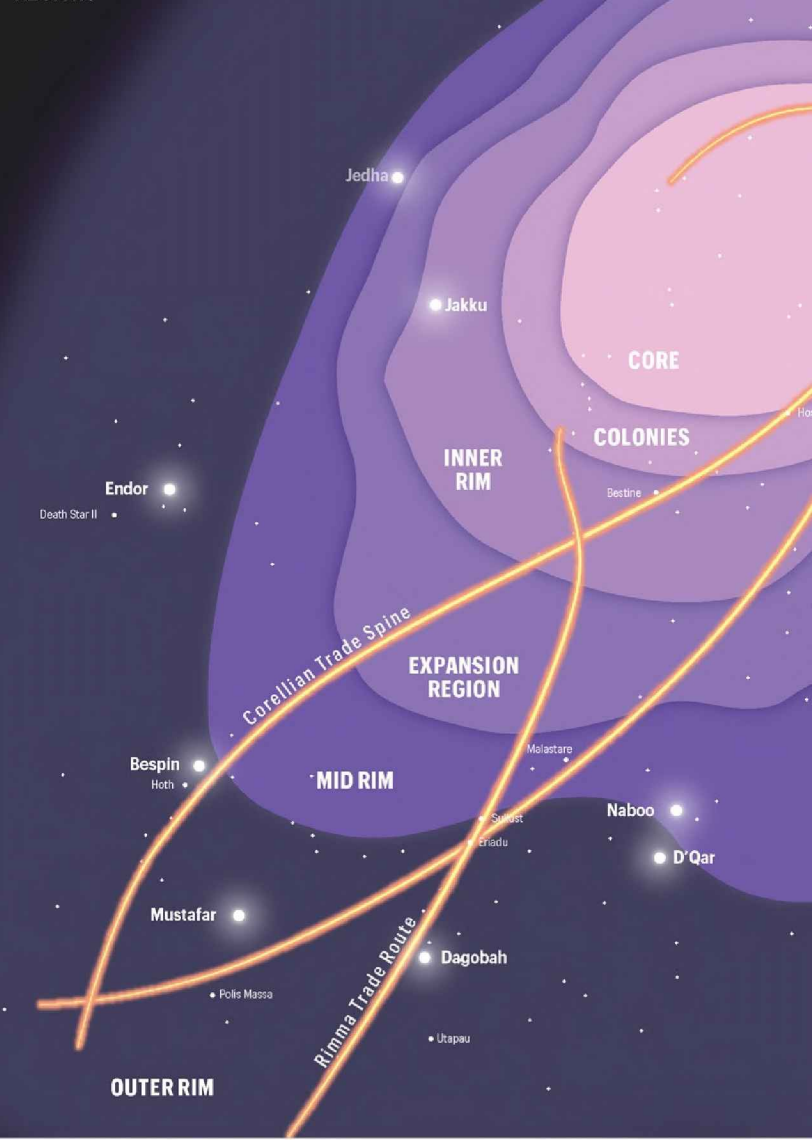
ENDOR

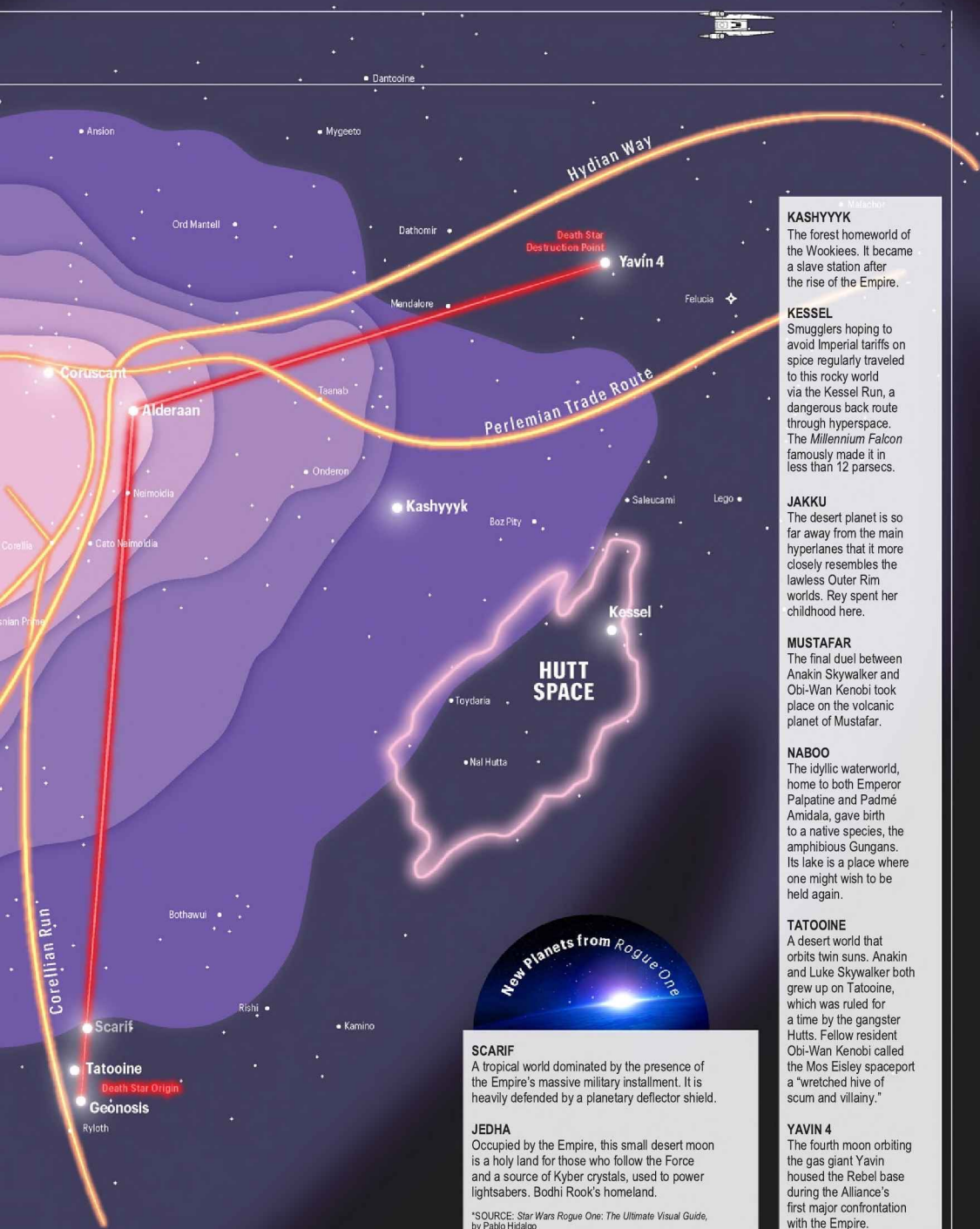
After the destruction of the first Death Star, the Emperor ordered that a second be constructed above this secluded forest moon. The Ewoks live here.

GEONOSIS

The factories of this rocky and uninviting planet pumped out droids for the Separatist armies. Later it was the construction site for the first Death Star.

UNKNOWN REGIONS





KASHYYYK

The forest homeworld of the Wookiees. It became a slave station after the rise of the Empire.

KESSEL

Smugglers hoping to avoid Imperial tariffs on spice regularly traveled to this rocky world via the Kessel Run, a dangerous back route through hyperspace. The *Millennium Falcon* famously made it in less than 12 parsecs.

JAKKU

The desert planet is so far away from the main hyperlanes that it more closely resembles the lawless Outer Rim worlds. Rey spent her childhood here.

MUSTAFAR

The final duel between Anakin Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi took place on the volcanic planet of Mustafar.

NABOO

The idyllic waterworld, home to both Emperor Palpatine and Padmé Amidala, gave birth to a native species, the amphibious Gungans. Its lake is a place where one might wish to be held again.

TATOOINE

A desert world that orbits twin suns. Anakin and Luke Skywalker both grew up on Tatooine, which was ruled for a time by the gangster Hutts. Fellow Resident Obi-Wan Kenobi called the Mos Eisley spaceport a "wretched hive of scum and villainy."

YAVIN 4

The fourth moon orbiting the gas giant Yavin housed the Rebel base during the Alliance's first major confrontation with the Empire.

SCARIF

A tropical world dominated by the presence of the Empire's massive military installment. It is heavily defended by a planetary deflector shield.

JEDHA

Occupied by the Empire, this small desert moon is a holy land for those who follow the Force and a source of Kyber crystals, used to power lightsabers. Bodhi Rook's homeland.

*SOURCE: *Star Wars Rogue One: The Ultimate Visual Guide*, by Pablo Hidalgo





Twisted & Evil

That's how Obi-Wan described the Sith Lord. Join us as we journey to the dark side and bow down to the greatest cinematic bad guy of all time. **BY CHRIS NASHAWATY**

STAR WARS FANS HAVE BEEN COUNTING DOWN the days until *Rogue Ones* since the moment it was first announced. But would any of us be this excited if the new film didn't include Darth Vader? Not a chance. That's because Darth Vader is, was and always will be the greatest movie villain of all time. I suppose some people could make a case for Hannibal Lecter, Norman Bates or Dracula. Maybe even the Wicked Witch of the West or Lord Voldemort. But to paraphrase a certain Sith Lord, I find their lack of faith disturbing.

It was clear from his first appearance in 1977's *A New Hope* (then just *Star Wars*) that Vader was operating on an entirely different plane of villainy than anyone who'd ever come before in the history of cinema—a plane of almost primeval myth, madness and metaphor. His indelible introduction comes just 4½ minutes into the film—shockingly early considering that we don't even know who the hero is at that point. The music on the soundtrack turns menacing (not quite “The Imperial March” but a close, equally harrowing cousin). And he emerges from the shadows and fog: a towering figure in black, like the sadistic gunslinger in some futuristic Western. His cloak, his gloves, his

“Join me, and together we can rule the galaxy as father and son.” Darth Vader tries to recruit Luke in *The Empire Strikes Back*.

boots, all of it is as dark as obsidian—a stark contrast to the sterile white of both his surroundings and the fallen stormtroopers lying lifeless on the ground. Mostly, it's his helmet that haunts us—a sci-fi riff on the Japanese samurai's Kabuto. This swaggering onyx specter doesn't speak . . . yet. His entrance is beyond language. All we hear is the echoing in-and-out rhythm of his breaths. As Obi-Wan will later say with sadness, he's "more machine, now, than man."

But soon Vader will speak. And when he does, the hairs on the back of our necks stand up and salute as that deceptively calm, British-inflected voice (delivered through James Earl Jones's deep baritone) is summoned to interrogate a Rebel spy whom he clutches by the neck. Vader's brute, sadistic strength is so great that he lifts the insurgent off the ground with one hand until he snaps his neck with a loud crunch that some Foley artist is probably still dining out on. Who is this person? Is this a person?

It's the stuff of childhood nightmares. You can measure a movie villain by how deeply we feel his nefarious, looming presence even when he's not onscreen. And Vader haunts every frame of the *Star Wars* series. He's the bogeyman we see even when we don't. Especially when we don't.

If Vader's black-on-black iconography is a bit on the nose, nothing else about him is. Over the course of the original trilogy (and at the tail end of *Revenge of the Sith*), the man/machine formerly known as Anakin Skywalker reveals layer upon layer of deep symbolic meaning. He was once a Jedi Knight ("the best star pilot in the galaxy," according to Obi-Wan). He was seduced by the dark side, a power-mad ethos so ruthless that he allows the destruction of the peaceful planet of Alderaan just to make a point to Princess Leia. And most important, he was a father—a father whose impulsiveness and passion ran so deep that he'd rather embrace chaos than risk the pain of losing the ones he loves. It's hard to imagine a more loaded Freudian backstory ever put on celluloid.

It's often been said that *Star Wars* is Luke Skywalker's hero's journey. And that's true as far as it goes. But the hero at the heart of George Lucas's intergalactic saga pales next

to the story's villain. Luke doesn't have the same charisma or complexity. Vader is on a different and more seductive journey—the antihero's journey. And it's far more psychologically thrilling because it's messy and murky and even more human. After all, before he was lured to the dark side, before he was Darth Vader, Anakin was one of us—a man wrestling with free will and destiny. He was the Chosen One meant to bring balance to the Force. Ultimately he has to make a choice—and he makes two. First, to become cinema's ultimate fallen angel. Then, just before his death, as he reveals his hideously scarred face, he also reveals his humanity—finally. Even for someone as evil as Darth Vader, there's a chance for redemption. The circle, as someone once said, is now complete.





▲ Darth Vader makes his memorably menacing entrance in *A New Hope*. David Prowse played him in the original trilogy (with James Earl Jones providing the voice).

◀ In a scene from *The Empire Strikes Back*, Vader tells Boba Fett (Jeremy Bulloch) he can take Han Solo to Jabba the Hutt, much to the horror of Lando Calrissian (Billy Dee Williams).

DARTH-O-METER

RATING VADER

There's a reason Darth Vader stands as the most iconic onscreen villain of all time. We ranked his most evil moments, from nasty to downright despicable. —BY DEVAN COGGAN



- | | | |
|--|----|---|
| | 10 | Force choking Imperial officers. "I find your lack of faith disturbing," he tells one. |
| | 8 | Choking Captain Antilles to death on the Rebel blockade runner. |
| | 6 | Handing his son Luke over to the Emperor. |
| | 4 | Torturing Leia (who turns out to be his daughter!). |
| | 2 | Slaughtering the young Padawans, which seals his transformation from Anakin Skywalker into Darth Vader. |
| | 1 | Killing his onetime friend and mentor Obi-Wan Kenobi. |
| Freezing Han Solo in carbonite. | 9 | |
| Shooting down Rebel pilots during the Battle of Yavin. | 7 | |
| Chopping off Luke's hand (then telling him he's his father). | 5 | |
| Allowing the Empire to blow up Alderaan (making him complicit in the murder of 2 billion peaceful people). | 3 | |

The Devil Is in the Details

Even before we heard that chilling baritone, Darth Vader's pitch-black ensemble and less-than-human mask made his nefarious intentions all too clear. Here *Rogue One* production designer Doug Chiang dissects Vader's iconic look and how he brought the Sith Lord back to life.

By Devan Coggan



THE VADER GLEAM

One of the trickiest things about filming Vader is getting the reflective gleam just right. In the original trilogy, costumers would actually paint parts of the mask gray to create the illusion of a reflection. But for *Rogue One*, cinematographer Greig Fraser meticulously studied the classic films and used careful lighting to achieve the same effect.

THE FACE

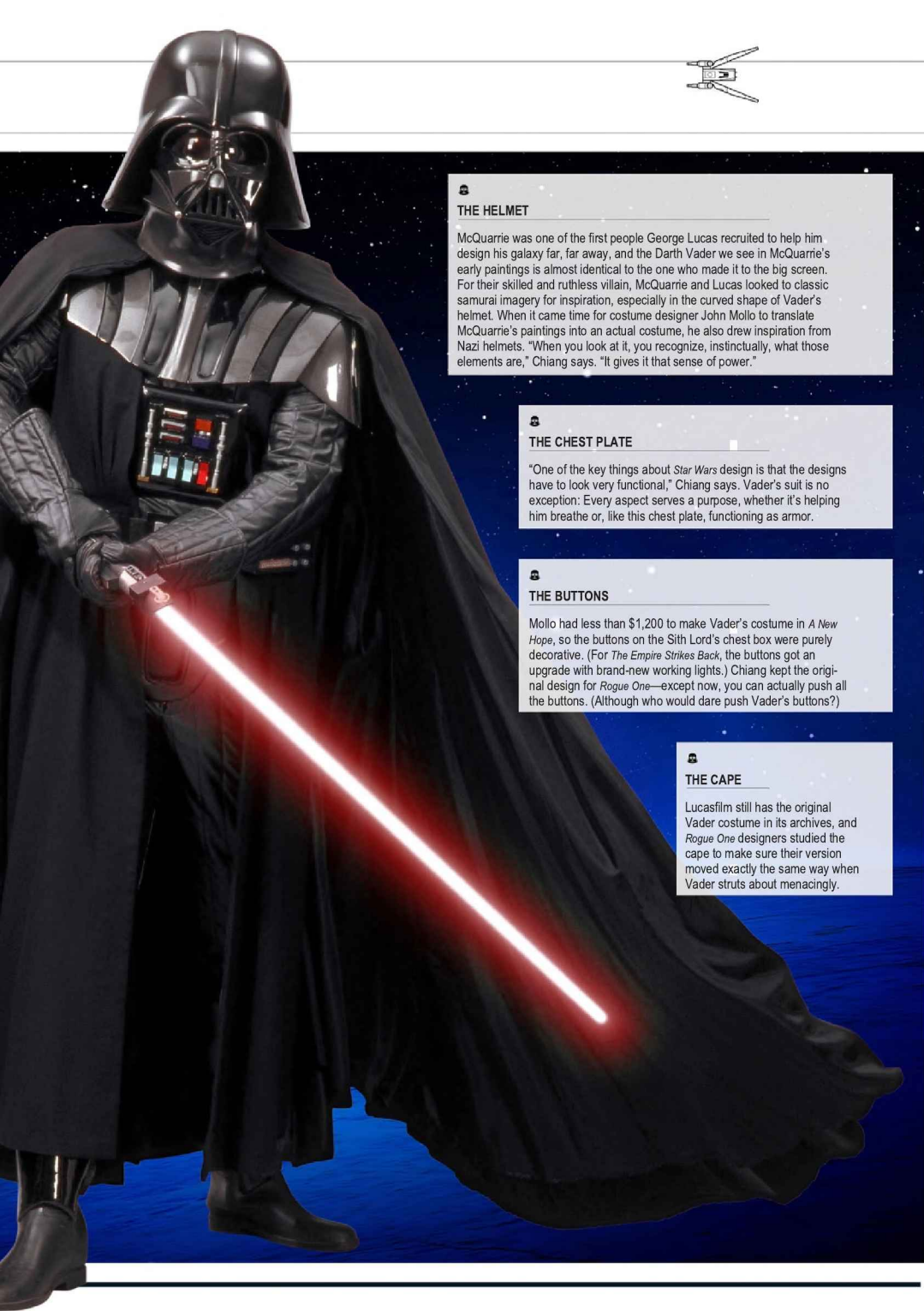
In Lucas's early drafts, Vader didn't have a mask, and it was concept artist Ralph McQuarrie who dreamed up the sinister-looking breathing apparatus, which would help him survive in space and travel freely from ship to ship. (Lucas later wrote McQuarrie's design into the story, turning it into the life-sustaining suit we all know.) It's no accident that Vader's grill resembles sharp teeth and his eyes evoke the hollow sockets of a skull—that too was part of McQuarrie's original design. "I remember when I first saw him onscreen, it looked like a death mask," Chiang says.

THE SUIT

Even within the original trilogy, Vader's uniform evolved from film to film. (In *The Empire Strikes Back*, for example, improvements in the mask's visibility were made.) Chiang and his team studied every version and came up with a hybrid for the new movie that feels familiar. They made slight tweaks to the helmet and chest panel so they would look more realistic. "I remember when I saw *Episode IV* and saw Vader, my memory of him is very distinct," Chiang says. "And when you look at the actual costume [in real life], it doesn't quite live up to it because of budget constraints. So our goal was to get it in the spirit of how we remember it."

THE HEIGHT

In his full uniform, Darth Vader is about 6'7", towering over the stormtroopers and pretty much everyone else other than Chewbacca.



THE HELMET

McQuarrie was one of the first people George Lucas recruited to help him design his galaxy far, far away, and the Darth Vader we see in McQuarrie's early paintings is almost identical to the one who made it to the big screen. For their skilled and ruthless villain, McQuarrie and Lucas looked to classic samurai imagery for inspiration, especially in the curved shape of Vader's helmet. When it came time for costume designer John Mollo to translate McQuarrie's paintings into an actual costume, he also drew inspiration from Nazi helmets. "When you look at it, you recognize, instinctually, what those elements are," Chiang says. "It gives it that sense of power."



THE CHEST PLATE

"One of the key things about *Star Wars* design is that the designs have to look very functional," Chiang says. Vader's suit is no exception: Every aspect serves a purpose, whether it's helping him breathe or, like this chest plate, functioning as armor.



THE BUTTONS

Mollo had less than \$1,200 to make Vader's costume in *A New Hope*, so the buttons on the Sith Lord's chest box were purely decorative. (For *The Empire Strikes Back*, the buttons got an upgrade with brand-new working lights.) Chiang kept the original design for *Rogue One*—except now, you can actually push all the buttons. (Although who would dare push Vader's buttons?)



THE CAPE

Lucasfilm still has the original Vader costume in its archives, and *Rogue One* designers studied the cape to make sure their version moved exactly the same way when Vader struts about menacingly.

Supply and Demand: The *Star Wars* Toy Story

Last year Disney and Hasbro had to navigate the public relations equivalent of an asteroid field when they failed to release Rey action figures in a timely manner. That wasn't the first time the public clamored for *Star Wars* toys that weren't available. By JOE MCGOVERN

DID YOU KNOW THAT PRINCESS LEIA AND

Boba Fett stole the *Millennium Falcon* from Han Solo? And that Darth Vader tried to break up the friendship between R2-D2 and C-3PO? In the vivid imaginations of many a playful child, all that happened and more. Fan fiction wasn't really a thing three decades ago, but the *Star Wars* franchise gave rise to millions of mini George Lucas—a whole generation of puppet masters who created their own sci-fi adventures and swashbuckling sagas, thanks to the wealth of plastic products that were merchandised in the wake of the first movie's success.

The story of the first *Star Wars* toys is a rich one, which seems fitting for such a fantastical saga. A company called Kenner Products, owned by General Mills, acquired the rights to produce a series of 3¼-in. action figures just a month before the release of (what is now called) *A New Hope* in May 1977. By year's end it had become the highest-grossing movie in history. That surprised entertainment-industry pundits—and Kenner, which was woefully unprepared for the astonishing toy demand. Back then action figures required at least a year to sculpt and produce, and the Cincinnati-based Kenner simply could not deliver Luke Skywalker and company to stores in time for the holiday season.

And so, on Christmas morning, thousands of children opened an empty cardboard box. In a risky move, Kenner began its clever marketing mission with what it called an Early Bird Certificate Package, which guaranteed purchase of the initial four figures (Luke, Leia, R2-D2, and Chewbacca) the following year. The gamble worked—in fact it actually intensified the fever for *Star Wars* swag. By the time Kenner

produced the last of its 114 original trilogy figures and several hundred toys in 1985, it had sold an extraordinary 250 million action figures. Kenner was bought by Hasbro in 1991, and the company still remains the gold standard of successful merch campaigns.

Excitement has held steady over the years. "It's all about the fun and passion that takes us beyond the films themselves and lets us share our love of *Star Wars* with a worldwide community," says Steve Sansweet of Rancho Obi-Wan, which houses the largest collection of *Star Wars* memorabilia in the world. "Fans over three generations can re-create scenes that were so rich in characters, vehicles and settings—or they can use their imaginations and make up their own stories."

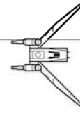
Star Wars toys are still a massive \$700 million business—one that's still surprisingly prone to hiccups. In 2015 Hasbro took a glacial approach to mass-marketing an action figure for Rey, the main character of *The Force Awakens*, reportedly over concerns that a girl figure wouldn't appeal to boys.

The company denied that gender was the reason, instead claiming that the Rey character was too spoilery to release as a stand-alone figure. (And if you believe that, we've got a Death Star to sell you.) At least Hasbro course-corrected in a big way in the months leading up to the release of *Rogue One*. At San Diego Comic-Con in July 2016, *Force Awakens*' own Gwendoline Christie (who plays Captain Phasma) unveiled the very first action figure from the *Rogue One* line. And who was it? Jyn Erso, naturally, played by Felicity Jones, the new movie's heroic protagonist. Take a look at this badass in her leather pants and utility vest. There's no boy or girl in the universe who wouldn't want to add her to their collection.



(Clockwise) Rey from *The Force Awakens*. Jyn Erso from *Rogue One* and the infamous Early Bird Certificate Package released after *A New Hope*.





GOOFY, GREAT AND...KIND OF GROSS

•••

There have been some awesome *Star Wars* toys. And then there have been some head-scratchers.



MILLENNIUM FALCON (2008)

The Force Awakens fired up the love for Han Solo's grungy ship, the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy. It's always been the bestselling vehicle in the *Star Wars* toy line, but most models were scaled too small in proportion to the action figures. In 2008 Hasbro finally released a 2½-ft.-long *Falcon* with comfortable cockpit seating for Han and Chewie.



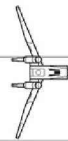
MISSILE-FIRING BOBA FETT (1978 & 1979)

Bounty hunter Boba Fett—subject of his own planned spinoff movie in 2020—was advertised as an action figure with a real rocket-firing backpack. Yet there was a failure to launch. Due to safety concerns, the firing mechanism was scrapped and replaced with a sonic-welded missile. "The only ones that exist are a few dozen very pricey prototypes," says toy collector Steve Sansweet of Rancho Obi-Wan. Starting price for one of those on eBay: \$150,000.

BLUE SNAGGLETOOTH (1978 & 1979)

He was a little alien in the first movie's famous Cantina scene, but a mix-up led the Jawa-height, red-suited Snaggletooth to be released with a lot more stature, plus a blue costume and silver boots. "It's one of the strangest goofs in the history of *Star Wars* action figures," says Sansweet.





PUMPED-UP LUKE, LEIA AND HAN (1995)

"The relaunch of *Star Wars* toys in 1995 was big news," Sansweet says. "Unfortunately so were the action figures." With people like Arnold Schwarzenegger in peak box office form, Hasbro convinced Lucasfilm that *Star Wars* fans were hungry for some anabolic steroids in their toy diet. "It took two years to slim down the line," Sansweet says. "By which time older fans had developed nicknames such as 'Roid Rage Luke, Monkey-face Leia and Han Solo-flex.'"



TELL US ABOUT YOUR TOYS

The cast spills on merch of childhoods past

Ben Mendelsohn

"I had plenty of the figures. I had some X-wing fighters, a Falcon, a TIE fighter or two. The most important thing to me were the trading cards. The one with Han and Chewie firing down one of the corridors—that was the really, really rare one. And I got two of them."

Alan Tudyk

"I had a pilot, one of the X-wing fighters. I had this one random pilot that I would always just fly through the air. It was more like a Cirque du Soleil performer. I was turning him into an acrobat. I was a pretty odd kid."

Riz Ahmed

"My brother had these AT-AT walker toys, and I used to play with them. And we had a Chewie toy and I think we had a Luke Skywalker toy."

BB-8 (2015)

The Force Awakens' adorable bowling ball has been sold as key chains and plush toys. But the best bet is this 4.5-in. model released by robot manufacturer Sphero, which can project holograms and includes a patrol mode so that BB-8 can seek out cats to costar with him on YouTube.



TAUNTAUN WITH OPEN BELLY RESCUE (1981)

In *The Empire Strikes Back*, the gnarliest scene of the *Star Wars* canon involves Han Solo lightsabering the belly of his dead Tauntaun as a makeshift sleeping bag for the frostbitten Luke Skywalker. "This may smell bad, kid," Han warns, "but it'll keep you warm." In 1981, after having already released a Tauntaun sans disembowelment, Kenner manufactured the product with rubber tummy flaps. Intestines, at least, were not included.





Till Death Star Do Us Part

Since its debut nearly 40 years ago, the Death Star has loomed in our collective consciousness as the ultimate symbol of malevolent power. *Rogue One* shows us how it all began.

By Darren Franich

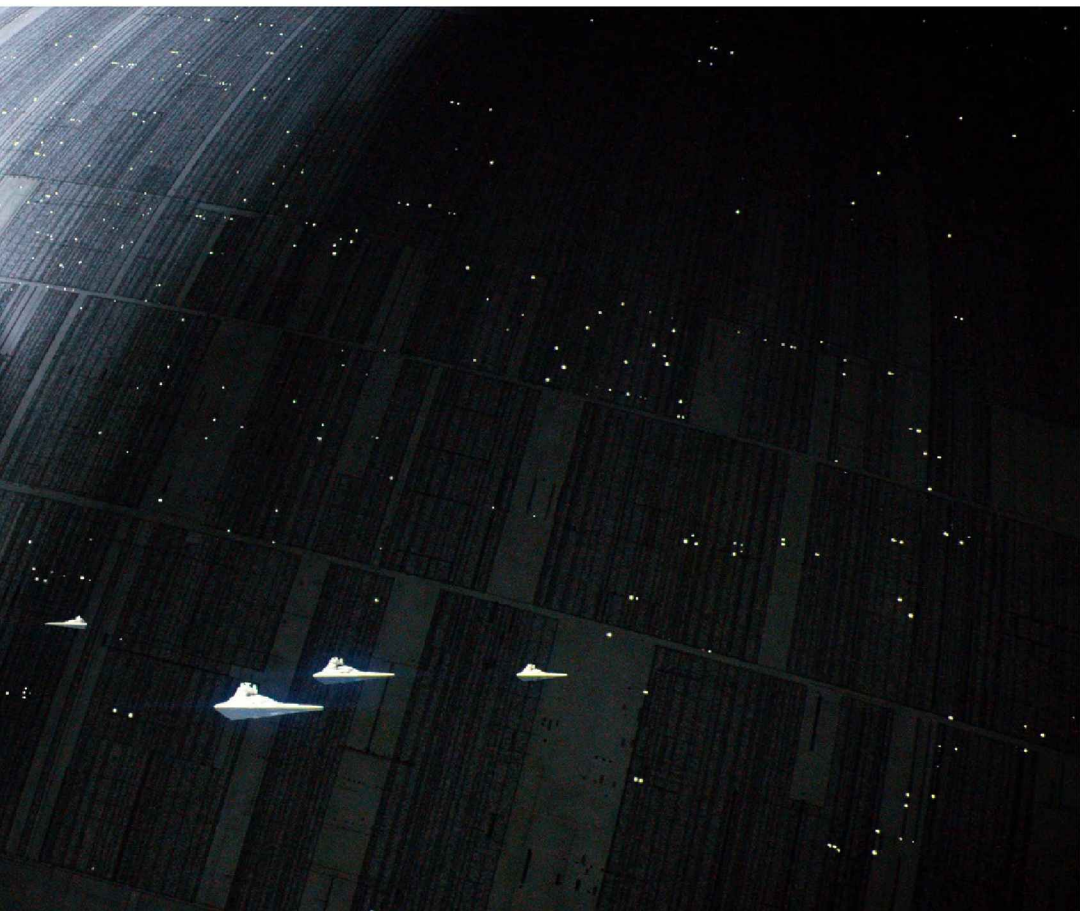
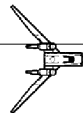
"REBEL SPIES MANAGED TO STEAL SECRET plans to the Empire's ultimate weapon, the DEATH STAR."

So states the opening crawl of *A New Hope*, providing the elevator pitch for *Rogue One* 39 years early. The Death Star is the plot-kick-starting McGuffin, the main location, the arch-villain, the final battlefield.

It represents the Empire's military muscle. And it symbolizes the technological wonder of the new age of cinematic spectacle that began in the '70s. John Stears, the mechanical-effects supervisor who designed the space station, had a long career working on the 007 film franchise

before joining the *Star Wars* team. With his Death Star model, he took George Lucas's initial idea and made the ultimate Bond-villain lair, a planetoid of terror.

The Death Star blows up: spoiler alert! But the explosion is just the beginning. The Empire builds a more powerful Death Star in time for *Return of the Jedi*—a half-finished horror of jagged edges resembling a gray, grinning Jack O' Lantern. That second Death Star inspired one of the great riffs in *Star Wars* fandom. In Kevin Smith's *Clerks*, the characters ponder the fate of all the nameless contractors who perished mid-construction during the Rebels' attack. Its



influence has spread far beyond geekdom. The Dallas Cowboys' massive new domed stadium, for instance, was nicknamed the Death Star by fans when it opened in 2009. The park is now called AT&T Stadium—which is ironic considering that AT&T's logo has been nicknamed the Death Star by people who are not fans of AT&T.

As the *Star Wars* franchise expanded, the legacy of the Empire's superweapon created an anxiety of influence, as new enemies (and writers) dreamed up ever-more cosmic threats with appropriately bombastic names like World Devastator and Sun Crusher. In *The Force Awakens* someone

describes Starkiller Base as “another Death Star.” But a size comparison disproves that notion: Next to Starkiller, the Death Star really is just a moon.

The space station actually appeared briefly in the second trilogy, symbolically stitching the prequels to the originals. At the close of *Revenge of the Sith*, Darth Vader and Emperor Palpatine stare at the massive ball of Imperial might, under construction two decades before the *New Hope* timeline. *Rogue One* brings the franchise full circle, to Rebel spies and secret plans. We know what happens to the Death Star. Let's hope the Rebel spies turn out okay.

“That’s no moon. It’s a space station,” says Obi-Wan Kenobi in *A New Hope*. Here, in a shot from *Rogue One*, the Death Star dwarfs Imperial starships.

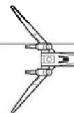
SPHERE OF INFLUENCE

♦ ♦ ♦

Some seriously crazy stuff goes down on the Death Star in *A New Hope*, including the five iconic moments shown here. As for re-creating the orb of evil for *Rogue One*, production designer Doug Chiang says there was plenty of new territory to explore. "We're going to see the Death Star in more angles than how it's been seen before," he explains. "For instance, what does the North Pole look like? Or the South Pole? We're going to see that."

(Clockwise) Luke Skywalker and Princess Leia (Mark Hamill and Carrie Fisher) prepare to swing over the core shaft to escape stormtroopers; Leia, Chewbacca (Peter Mayhew), Han Solo (Harrison Ford) and Luke go from bad to worse when they end up in the trash compactor; Obi-Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness) faces his former pupil during his final moments of life; Darth Vader (David Prowse) prepares to torture Leia; Han, Luke and C-3PO (Anthony Daniels) take over the control room.





BLAST FROM THE PAST

DADDY DEATH STAR

Princess Leia recognized his "foul stench" when she was brought on board the Death Star. Will *Rogue One* reacquaint us with Grand Moff Tarkin? — BY ANTHONY BREZNICAN



Grand Moff Tarkin (Peter Cushing, seen here in *A New Hope*) is so nasty, not even Darth Vader makes him flinch.

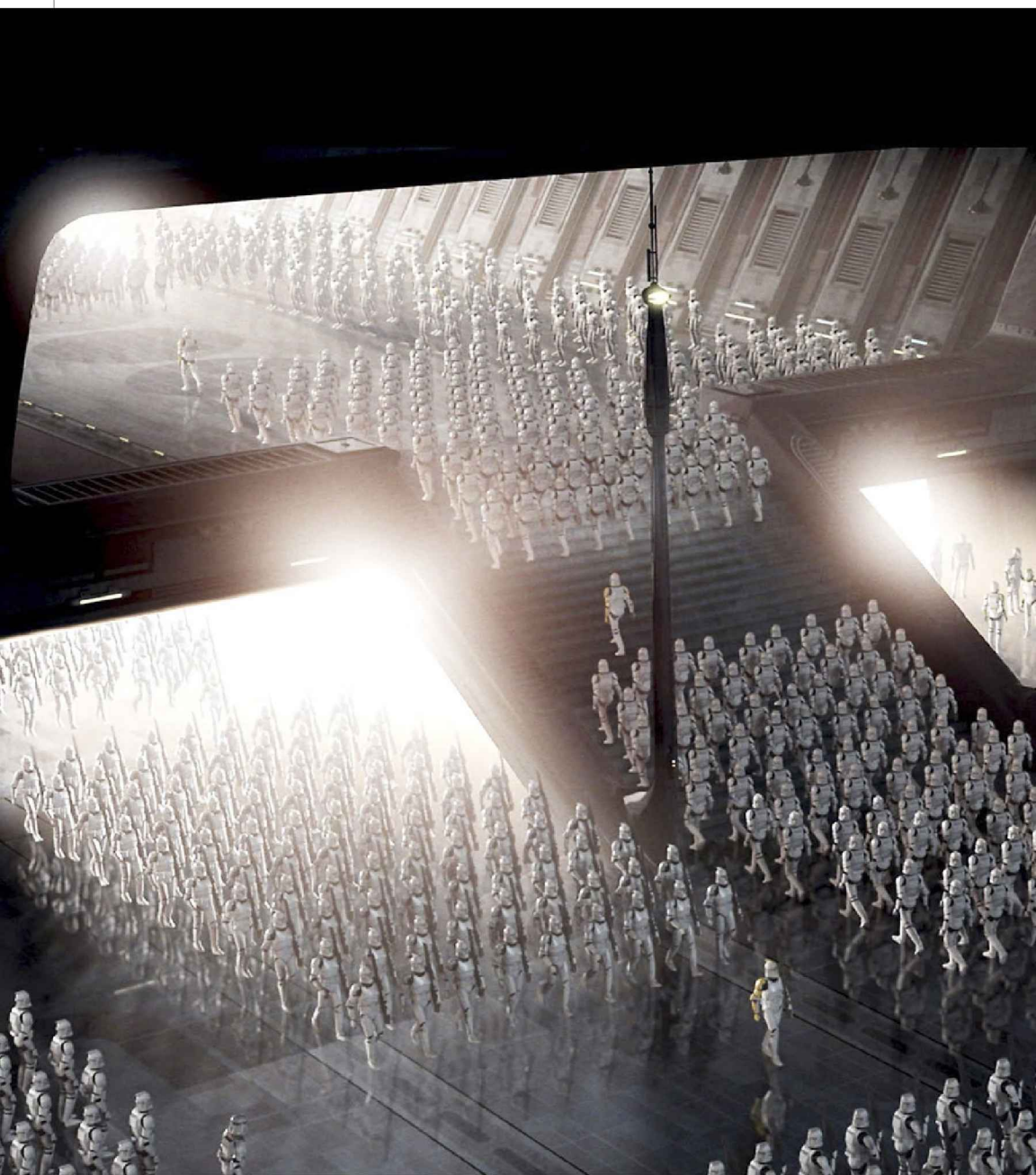
One enduring question about *Rogue One* is whether it will resurrect a long-lost villain: Grand Moff Tarkin, known in *Star Wars* lore as the father of the Empire's Death Star.

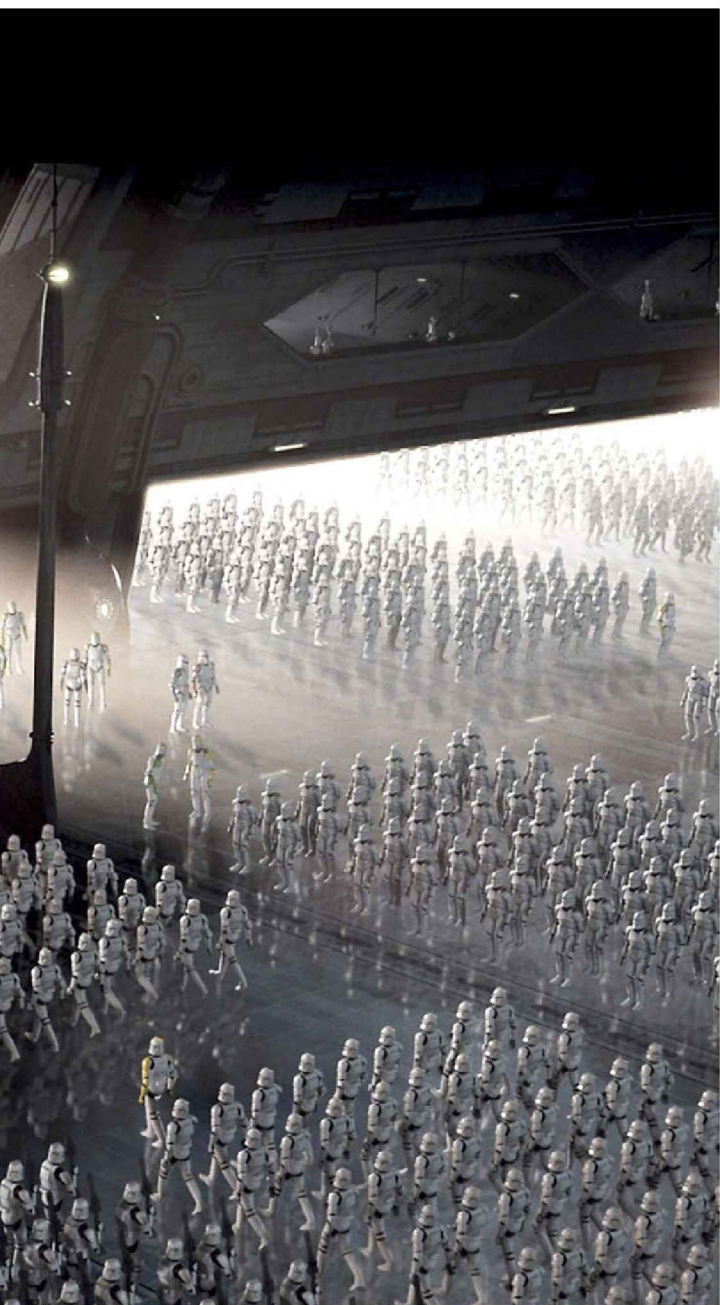
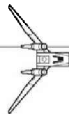
With his dagger-sharp cheekbones, pitted eyes and perma-scowl, the high-ranking Imperial commander was an icy contrast to Darth Vader's hottheadedness in the original 1977 movie. When Vader began Force-choking the life out of rival officers who displeased him, it was Tarkin who yanked the Sith Lord's leash.

And as the Death Star drifted into position to obliterate the Rebel stronghold on the moon Yavin 4, Tarkin arrogantly (and foolishly) dismissed the X-wings that were closing in on the battle station's weak spot. "Evacuate? In our moment of triumph?" he scoffed. Famous last words.

But perhaps that's not Tarkin's last bow. Rumors have suggested the character may make an appearance in *Rogue One*. Since the story involves stealing the Death Star's blueprints, it stands to reason that Tarkin might be in the mix, perhaps interacting with one of the super-weapon's other fathers: Jyn's own dad, Galen Erso, who is helping the Empire create the giant space station.

Peter Cushing, the actor who originally portrayed Tarkin, died in 1994, but advances in digital animation could help bring his incarnation back from the beyond—a fitting encore for an actor famous for vampire horror films. Or perhaps a new actor will step into the role, as Wayne Pygram did for the character's cameo in *Revenge of the Sith*. Either way, Tarkin's legend would live on.





The Empire's Army

Even a Sith Lord's minions have to change with the times. Here we look at how the fearsome soldiers in shiny white armor have transformed over the years.

BY DEVAN COGGAN

WHEN STAR WARS COSTUME DESIGNER JOHN Mollo accepted the 1978 Oscar for costume design, he did so flanked by actors wearing his most memorable creations: Darth Vader in full, black regalia, Princess Leia in flowing white and two menacing stormtroopers. Sci-fi is riddled with faceless evil armies but none as iconic as the Empire's infantry. The prequels introduced the formidable clones, and the stormtroopers of *The Force Awakens* got a sleek update. *Rogue One* returns to the classic armor that won Mollo an Oscar. "Our goal was that you could edit *Episode IV* and *Rogue One* together, and the costumes and the looks of the characters would flow seamlessly," production designer Doug Chiang says. But that doesn't mean there weren't some upgrades: As previous episodes did with scout troopers on Endor or the snowtroopers on Hoth, *Rogue One* introduces Shoretroopers, who thrive in tropical climates, and highly skilled Death Troopers, who work as elite bodyguards. Here we explore the evolution of the intimidating enforcers.

Imperial Stormtroopers, originally all clones of Jango Fett, assemble here en masse in *Attack of the Clones*.



1
THE CLONE (ATTACK OF THE CLONES)
We first meet the prototype stormtroopers in *Episode II*. An alternative to battle droids, clone troopers are fiercely loyal to the Galactic Republic and modeled on the bounty hunter Jango Fett. For their armor, Chiang did a bit of reverse-engineering, combining Jango's silhouette and the stark white armor of the stormtroopers from *A New Hope*.

2
CLONE 2.0 (REVENGE OF THE SITH)
The clone troopers start to look more like the troopers we know, especially in the eyes and the

shape of the headgear. "We wanted to create the costume to evoke Jango Fett," Chiang says. "The evolution then became what ultimately is going to turn out to be the stormtrooper helmet." We also start to see more clones with a bit of color in the armor, designating an individual trooper's rank.

3
SHORETROOPERS (ROGUE ONE)
When you're hopping between galactic ecosystems, that bulky white armor isn't always practical. Part of *Rogue One* takes place on the tropical planet Scarif, so Chiang and director Gareth Edwards came up with a specialized Shoretrooper designed to thrive in the hot climate. An eye shield protects troopers from the

blazing sun, and Chiang swapped out heavy armor for more breathable fabric (inspired by the scout troopers from *Return of the Jedi*). Costume designers Dave Crossman and Clint Dillon upgraded the color palette too, pulling swatches from World War II planes like the German Messerschmitt. "There are little accents of blue and red and orange, and those are pulled right from the plane," Chiang says. "When you do that, it just ties our designs to reality."

4
DEATH TROOPERS (ROGUE ONE)
If stormtroopers had a SEAL Team Six, it would look like this. Edwards wanted to create an elite squad of Imperial bodyguards who are taller,



thinner and more powerful than your everyday stormtrooper. To make them even more ominous, designers added hints of Darth Vader in the helmet, as well as a faint green glow near the eyes, inspired by night-vision goggles.

5

THE CLASSIC (A NEW HOPE)

Original trilogy designer Ralph McQuarrie drew inspiration from Nazi imagery when creating the soldiers. "They evoked the idea of living skeletons," Chiang says. (Fun fact: McQuarrie's stormtroopers also had lightsabers before George Lucas decided those were only for Jedi.) The troopers of *Rogue One* are virtually identical to the ones from *A New Hope*, unless you look

closer. "The stormtroopers have been given a high-definition makeover from head to toe," Crossman says. "They're much more defined—something they would have wanted to do originally but were unable to do back then. We were able to create a sharper suit and more defined helmets." In *A New Hope*, helmet details like the vents were just painted on. In *Rogue One* they're actually carved out. Edwards also purposely cast leaner actors to make his stormtroopers seem less bulky and more like McQuarrie's original concept art. "There's something very threatening and powerful about seeing a very thin, athletic figure versus somebody that's heavily armored, like a football player," Chiang says.

6 7

THE CLASSIC 2.0 AND 3.0 (THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK AND RETURN OF THE JEDI)

Their look didn't change much over the course of the original trilogy, apart from the introduction of snowtroopers in *The Empire Strikes Back* and scout troopers in *Return of the Jedi*. If it ain't broke . . .

8

THE CLASSIC 4.0 (THE FORCE AWAKENS)

Set three decades after *Return of the Jedi*, *The Force Awakens* introduces a new and improved (but still recognizable) stormtrooper, with lots of sleek lines. Costume designer Michael Kaplan has said that he wanted to simplify the design, asking himself, "What would Apple do?"

The ABCs of Starships

Rogue One introduces a new aircraft to the Rebellion's fleet of ships named after letters of the alphabet: the U-wing. Is it as cool as the beloved X-wing, piloted by Luke, Wedge and their brethren? Or is it another Y-wing, the toy you handed to your younger sibling while you played with the X-wing? We'll leave it to you to decide. By Darren Franich





1

A-WING

Not as powerful or as flashy as the X-wing, this fleet speedster had a minor role in *Return of the Jedi*. The saga of the A-wing continues: On a visit to the set of 2017's *Star Wars: Episode VIII*, Prince Harry was photographed inside what appears to be an A-wing cockpit.

2

B-WING

Seen in the Battle of Endor in *Return of the Jedi*, this single-pilot bomber wasn't as nimble as some starfighters, but it was designed to rain ballistic hell down on large Imperial ships. It's also got a unique design, with wings rotating around a stationary cockpit, a gyroscopic aesthetic originally developed for the Millennium Falcon.

3

V-WING

Although largely seen in the background of *Revenge of the Sith*, the V-wing is one of the cleverest bits of *Star Wars* design. The ship was created by the Republic in the late prequel era, and its pointy nose resembles those of the original trilogy's Rebel starships. But the wings on either side imply a link to the Imperial TIE fighters—a link made explicit by the V-wing's screaming engine sound.

4

X-WING

Colin Cantwell and Joe Johnston designed the most iconic of Rebel ships as a spaced-out variation on a World War II dogfighter, with an eye toward 360-degree agility and speed. In their first appearance at the end of *A New Hope*, the X-wings represented the pinnacle of the *Star Wars* aesthetic. They are intentionally more primitive-looking than the spheroid Death Star—retro-futuristic, dirty and burnt-out from past battles. But there's a swagger in the way that the S-foil wings expand into the X "attack" position.

5

U-WING

"Our conceit is that the U-wing came from the same factory that was manufacturing X-wings," says *Rogue One* executive producer John Knoll. "They could have been in *New Hope* if you just panned the camera over there."

Additional reporting by Anthony Breznican

Can *Rogue One* Make Us Rethink the Prequels?

There may be no Roman numeral in the title, but *Rogue One* is very much a *Star Wars* prequel—one that pays homage to both the original trilogy and *Episodes I-III*. It's a clever strategy. But is that enough for us to look at those movies with fresh eyes? By Darren Franich

"WHY ARE THEY MAKING ANOTHER STAR WARS prequel?" is not a question anyone seems to be asking about *Rogue One*.

Disney has strenuously avoided the p-word in all official statements. But make no mistake. *Rogue One* is a prequel. It takes place right before one of the most successful movies ever made. It features Darth Vader before he attacks the Tantive IV, as well as Mon Mothma before her big *Return of the Jedi* speech. The film is an origin story—the first *Rogue* tale, before Luke Skywalker and Wedge Antilles flew together under that designation.

At the same time, *Rogue One* is also a sequel. Eleven years ago, *Revenge of the Sith* ended with chaos throughout the galaxy. The Sith Lord formerly known as Anakin Skywalker looked on as the Empire started building a superweapon capable of ending worlds. *Rogue One* picks up the *Episode III* story—and, apparently, carries it right to the beginning of *Episode IV*.

Now, the *Star Wars* prequels are controversial. (Let's understate things, shall we?) They loom large in geek culture as a symbol for what *not* to do: an excess of green-screen CGI effects, a focus on arcane space politics, a romance with zero chemistry, the Padawan braid, the word "Padawan." Consensus on J.J. Abrams's *The Force Awakens*, on the other hand, is that it recaptured the spirit of the original movies—which is to say, it strenuously avoided the spirit of the prequels.

Rogue One represents an even wilder gambit: asking viewers to reconsider their perspective on the whole notion of a *Star Wars* prequel. The film features an appearance by Jimmy Smits as Bail Organa, a key supporting figure in *Revenge of the Sith*. More impressively, on the level of pure nerd minutiae, the film gives Genevieve O'Reilly the chance to finally play Mon Mothma—as

the rebel leader we love, not the silent senator most people didn't notice in *Sith*. The prequel canon weaves itself into *Rogue One* via Forest Whitaker's Saw Gerrera, who first appeared in the *Clone Wars* TV series.

The open secret about *Star Wars* is that the future of the franchise is full of prequels: movies set before the original trilogy, with younger variations of beloved characters. Alden Ehrenreich is playing Young Han Solo in a movie . . . or three. Rumors abound of a Boba Fett origin film. So *Rogue One* is a testing ground of sorts: an attempt to step backward, once again, on the *Star Wars* timeline.

It may also represent a greater cultural shift. A decade ago prequel complaints ran wild; a common chorus argued that George Lucas had "ruined" childhoods. Now that *Star Wars* is back, maybe it's possible to see *Episodes I-III* with clearer eyes. The allegory was undercooked, but there's a way of reading *Episode III* in particular as George Lucas's response to the Bush era, overflowing with incoherent yet tantalizing ideas about how fascism arises from democracy.

Rogue One looks, from the outside, like the anti-*Phantom Menace*: fewer Jedi, less politics, more guns, more actual wars than stars. But *Rogue One* honors the spirit of the prequels: with Smits, O'Reilly and Saw Gerrera, and with the very idea of digging into the saga's past to plot its big-screen future. *Rogue One* is more than just a spinoff. It's an attempt to bridge the gap between generations, onscreen and off: between the Coruscant Senate Chamber and the Mos Eisley Cantina, between the original trilogy's practical effects and the prequels' digital overload, between the gen Xer who grew up on *A New Hope* and the young millennial nostalgic for pod races. *The Force Awakens* saved the franchise's future. *Rogue One* wants to save the past.

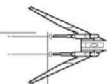
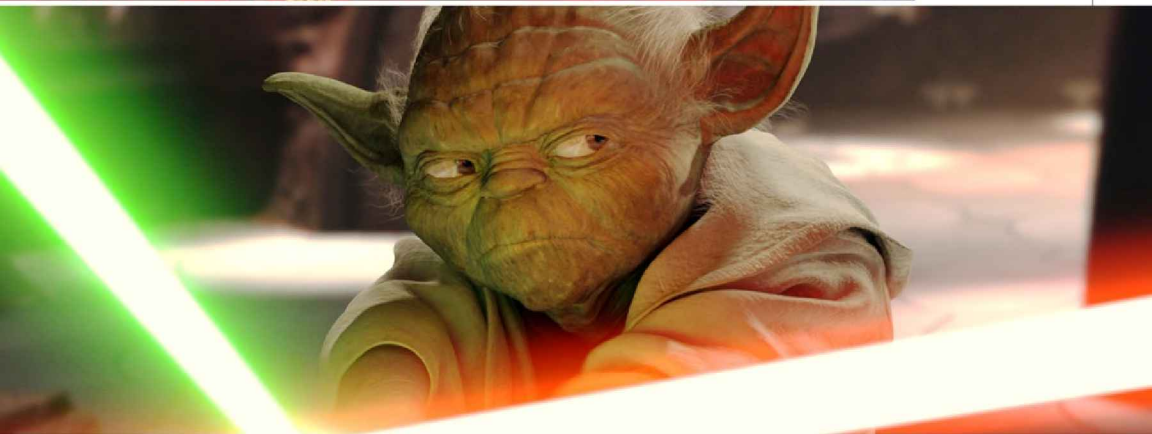


▲ The *Phantom Menace* introduces us to Queen Amidala (Natalie Portman), long before she falls for a future Sith Lord.

► Mess with Yoda you do not. The Jedi master prepares to open up a can of Light Side whipass in *Attack of the Clones*.

▼ Anakin Skywalker (Hayden Christensen) gives in to the Dark Side in *Revenge of the Sith*.





18

LIMBS LOST
DUE TO
LIGHTSABER

4

**FORCE
CHOKES**
DEALT OUT BY
DARTH VADER



(roughly)

2

METERS
LENGTH OF A
WOMP RAT

\$1,173

**BUDGET FOR THE ORIGINAL
DARTH VADER COSTUME**

15

**JYN ERSO'S AGE WHEN
SHE SET OUT ON HER OWN**



**NUMBER OF TIMES THE WORD "EWOK" IS
MENTIONED IN RETURN OF THE JEDI**

34

**YEARS BETWEEN
ROGUE ONE AND
THE FORCE AWAKENS**

97.6%

LIKELIHOOD
THAT THE
ROGUE ONE REBELS
WILL FAIL
(at something),
ACCORDING
TO K-2SO

(less than)

12

PARSECS
TIME IT TOOK THE
MILLENNIUM FALCON
TO MAKE
THE KESSEL RUN

900



Yoda's **age**
when he died

1138 THE DEATH STAR CELL BLOCK FROM WHICH LUKE CLAIMS HE AND HAN (disguised as stormtroopers)



\$852

QUADRILLION

HOW MUCH IT WOULD COST TO BUILD THE DEATH STAR
(according to *Lehigh economics students*)

1,358

KILOGRAMS
JABBA THE
HUTT'S WEIGHT



2187

DEATH STAR **PRISON**
CELL WHERE PRINCESS
LEIA WAS HELD

2

BILLION
NUMBER OF PEOPLE
KILLED IN
THE DESTRUCTION
OF ALDERAAN

12

MINUTES
DARTH VADER'S
TOTAL SCREEN
TIME IN
A *NEW HOPE*

485,560

**CREW
MEMBERS**
THE DEATH STAR II
CAN CARRY



1/3,720

**CHANCES OF SUCCESSFULLY
NAVIGATING AN ASTEROID FIELD**



ARE TRANSFERRING CHEWBACCA. THE NUMBER IS A CALL-BACK TO GEORGE LUCAS' *THX 1138*.



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